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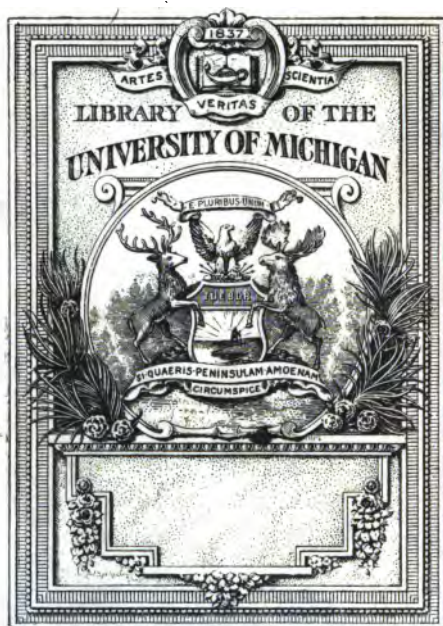
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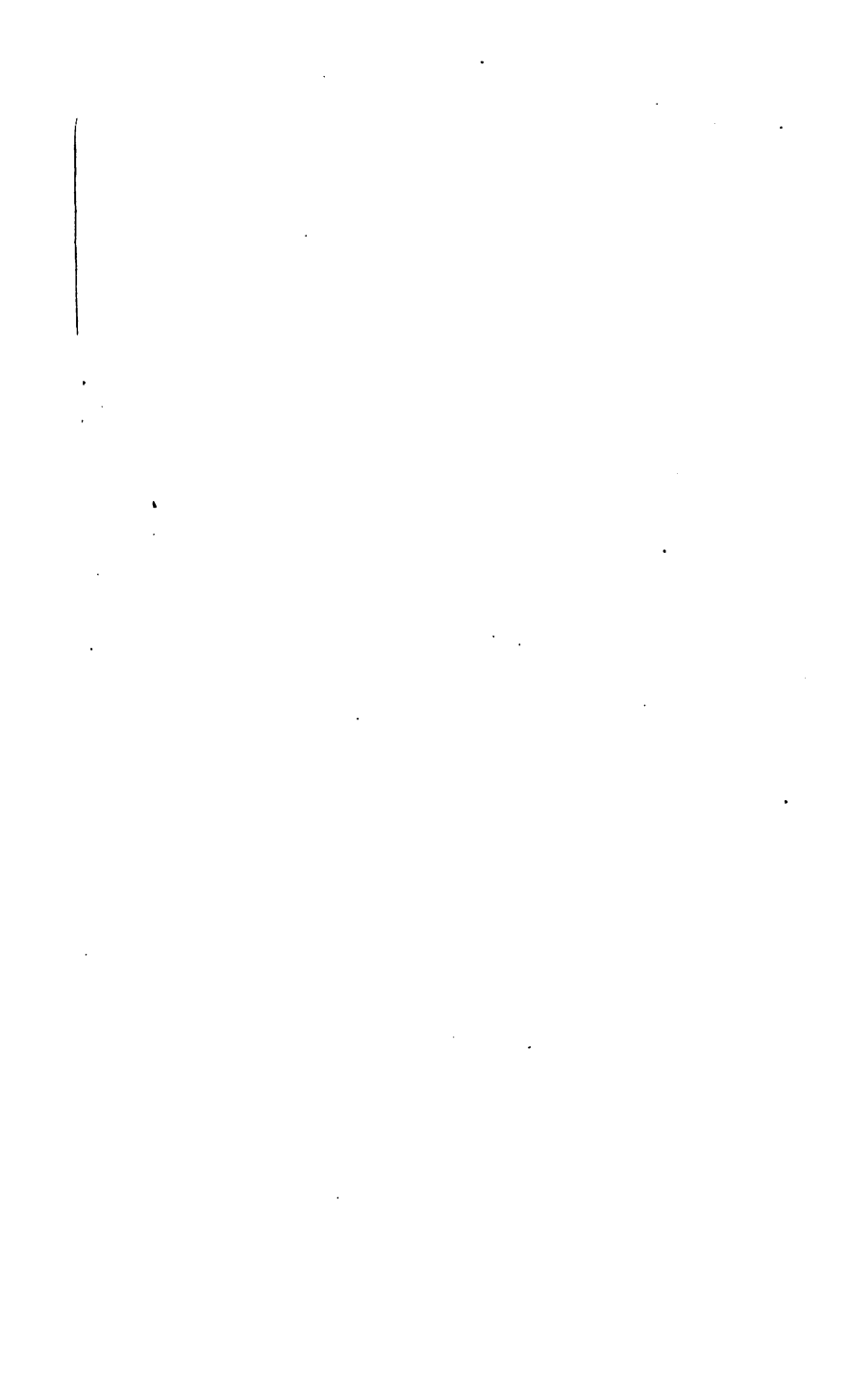
From

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31503

THE LIFE
OF
MARY, QUEEN of SCOTS.

BY
ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE,

AUTHOR OF "THE HISTORY OF THE GIRON-
DISTS," "FIOR D'ALIZA," ETC.

NEW YORK :
JOHN B. ALDEN, PUBLISHER.
1887.

MARY STUART, QUEEN OF SCOTS.

I.

IF another Homer were to arise, and if the poet were to seek another Helen for the subject of a modern epic of war, religion, and love, he would beyond all find her in Mary Stuart, the most beautiful, the weakest, the most attractive and most attracted of women, raising around her, by her irresistible fascinations, a whirlwind of love, ambition, and jealousy, in which her lovers became, each in his turn, the motive, the instrument, and the victim of a crime; leaving, like the Greek Helen, the arms of a murdered husband for those of his murderer; sowing the seeds of internecine, religious, and foreign war at every step, and closing by a saintly death the life of a Clytemnestra; leaving behind her indistinct memories exaggerated equally by Protestant and Catholic parties, the former interested in condemning her for all, the latter in absolving her from all, as if the same factions who had fought for her during her life had resolved to continue the combat after her death! Such was Mary Stuart.

That which a new Homer has not yet done in poetry, a sympathetic historian, M. Dargaud, enlightened by the researches of other learned writers, has recently achieved in his history of the Queen of Scots. It is from the extremely interesting documents collected by M. Dargaud that we shall now recompose—though frequently in a different spirit—that fair figure, and give a rapid sketch of a great picture.

II.

MARY STUART was the only daughter of James V., King of Scotland, [and of Marie de Lorraine, daughter of the Duke of Guise. She

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was born in Scotland on the 7th December, 1542. Her father was one of those adventurous, romantic, gallant, and poetic characters who leave behind them popular traditions of bravery and of licentiousness in the imagination of their country, like Francis I. and Henry IV. of France. Her mother possessed that genius, at once grave, ambitious, and sectarian, which distinguished the princes of the House of Guise, those true Maccabees of Popery on this side the Alps.

James V. died young, prophesying a mournful destiny for his daughter, yet in her cradle. This prophecy was suggested by his misgivings regarding the fate of a child, delivered up, during a long minority, to the contentions of a small kingdom torn by feudal and priestly factions and coveted by a neighbor so powerful as England. Protestantism and Catholicism had already embittered their dissensions with the fanaticism of two hostile religions defying each other face to face. The dying king had, after long hesitation, adopted the Catholic policy and proscribed the Puritans. M. Dargaud sees in this policy of James V. the cause of the ruin of Scotland and of the misfortunes of Mary, and at first sight we were tempted to think as he does. After a closer view, however, and on a consideration of the general political situation of Europe, and more particularly of Scotland, perhaps the Catholic party adopted by the king might have been safest for that country, if, indeed, Scotland could have been saved by state measures. It was not the Catholicism of Mary Stuart that proved fatal to Scotland; it was her youth, her levity, her loves, and her faults.

III.

WHERE, in fact, lay the true and permanent danger for Scotland? In the neighborhood, the ambition, and the power of England. Had Scotland at once become Protestant, as England had been since the time of Henry VIII., one of the greatest obstacles to her absorption by

England would have disappeared with the difference of religion. Catholicism was therefore esteemed a part of Scottish patriotism, and to destroy it would have been to tear their native country from the hearts of the Catholic portion of the people.

Moreover, Scotland, ceaselessly menaced by the domination or invasion of England, stood in need of powerful foreign alliances in Europe to aid her in preserving her independence and to furnish her with that moral and material support necessary to counterbalance the gold and the arms of the English. What were these continental alliances? France, Italy, the Pope, Spain. Scotland lived by such imposing protection; there lay her friendships, her vessels, her gold, her diplomacy, her auxiliary armies. Now all those powers—Italy, Spain, France, the House of Austria, the House of Lorraine—had adopted the Catholic cause with fanaticism, as opposed to the new religion. The Inquisition reigned at Madrid, the St. Bartholomew already cast its shadow over France, the Guises, uncles of Mary, were the very *core* of that league which attempted to proscribe Henry IV. on suspicion of heresy. Community of religion, therefore, could alone and at once interest the Pope, Italy, Austria, France, and Lorraine, to maintain with a strong hand the independence of Scotland. The day she ceased to become part of the great Catholic system established on the continent she fell, having no ally left save her mortal and natural enemy—England. Looking at the political rather than the religious aspect of affairs under James V., an alliance with Protestantism was an alliance with death. M. Dargaud's reproach of the dying king, therefore, may be an error engendered by his uncompromising predilection (which is also ours) for the cause of religious liberty. But religious liberty in Scotland at that time had no existence in either camp; parties attacked each other with equal ferocity, and Knox, the deadly foe of the Catholics, was not less intolerant than Cardinal Beaton, who proscribed the Puritans. Kings had only a

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choice of blood, for the fanatics of each communion equally demanded that it should be shed. For Scotland, then, the question was purely a diplomatic one. In confiding his daughter to Catholic Europe, James V. may have acted the part of a far-seeing parent and king. If fortune betrayed his policy and his tenderness, it was the fault of his heir and not of his testament.

IV.

HIS widow, Mary of Lorraine, deposed from the regency by the jealousy of the nobles, reconquered it by her ability, and allowed the cardinals—the usual supporters of thrones at that period—to govern the kingdom under her. Her daughter was sought after by all the courts of Europe, not only because of her precocious renown for genius and beauty, but also, and principally, for the purpose of acquiring, by marriage with her, a right to the Scottish crown—an acquisition strongly coveted by the wearers of other crowns. After a journey to Lorraine and France to pay a visit to her uncles, the Guises, the queen determined, by their advice, to marry her daughter to the Dauphin, son of Henry II.

Diana of Poitiers, the Aspasia of the age, had ruled Henry II. for twenty years, as much by the love she bore him as by the affection with which he regarded her; we know not, in fact, which of the two, the king or his mistress, may be said to have possessed the other, such a miracle of tenderness was the witchcraft of this passion of a young king and a woman of fifty. The Guises cultivated the friendship of Diana of Poitiers for the purpose of governing the league.

The Queen-Regent of Scotland left her child-daughter in the chateau of St. Germain, to grow up under their protection in the atmosphere of that France over which she was destined one day to reign. "*Votre fille est crue, et croit tous les jours en bonté, beauté et vertu,*" writes the Cardinal de Lorraine, her uncle, to the

Queen, his sister, after their return to Edinburgh, "le roi passe bien son temps à deviser avec elle. . . . Elle le sait aussi bien entretenir de bons et sages propos comme ferait une femme de vingt cinq ans." "Your daughter has grown much, and continues to grow every day in goodness, beauty, and virtue.

. . . The king passes much of his time in amusing himself with her. . . . She also knows well how to entertain him with wise converse, like that of a woman of five-and-twenty.

The learned and Italian education of the young Scottish woman developed the natural gifts she possessed. French, Italian, Greek, Latin, history, theology, poetry, music, and dancing, were all learned and studied under the wisest masters and greatest artists. In the refined and voluptuous court of the Valois, governed by a favorite, she was brought up rather as an accomplished court lady than as a future queen; and her education rather seemed to fit her for becoming the mistress than the wife of the Dauphin. The Valois were the Medici of France.

V.

THE poets of the court soon began to celebrate in their verses the marvels of her beauty and the treasures of her mind—

"En votre esprit, le ciel s'est surmonté,
Nature et art ont en votre beauté,
Mis tout le beau dont la beauté s'assemble!"

"The gods themselves excelled, in framing thy fair mind,
Nature and art in thy young form their highest powers
combined,
All beauty of the beautiful to concentrate in thee."

writes du Bellay, the Petrarch of the time.

Ronsard, who was the Virgil of the age, expresses himself, whenever he speaks of her, in such images and with such delicacy and polish of accent, as prove that his praise sprang from his love—that his heart had subjugated his genius. Mary was evidently the Beatrix of the poet

"Au milieu du printemps entre les lis naquit
 Son corps qui de blancheur les lis mêmes vainquit,
 Et les roses, qui sont du sang d'Adonis teintes
 Furent par sa couleur de leur vermeil dépeintes,
 Amour de ses beaux traits lui composa les yeux,
 Et les graces qui sont les trois filles des cieux
 De leurs dons les plus beaux cette princesse ornèrent
 Et pour mieux la servir les cieux abandonnèrent."
 "In fulness of the springtide, from among the lilies fair,
 Sprang forth that form of whiteness, fairer than the
 lilies there.
 Though stained with Adonis' blood, the gentle summer
 rose
 Lies vanquished by the ruby tint her cheeks and lips
 disclose.
 Young Love himself with arrows keen hath armed her
 peerless eye,
 The Graces too, those fairest three, bright daughters of
 the sky,
 With all their richest, rarest gifts my princess have
 endowed,
 And evermore to serve her well have left their high
 abode."

"Notre petite reinette Ecossaïse," said Cath-
 erine de Medici herself, who looked upon her
 with distaste, "our little Scottish queenling has
 only to smile in order to turn all the heads in
 France?"

Neither did the child love the Italian queen,
 whom, in her girlish scorn for the low-born
 house of Medici, she called "that Florentine
 market-woman." Her predilections were all in
 favor of Diana of Poitiers, who seems to have
 educated in her a daughter, a future competitor
 in beauty and empire. Diana cherished be-
 sides, in the young Scottish woman, a rival or
 possible victim of that Queen Elizabeth of Eng-
 land whom she detested, and whose power
 Mary had not yet felt. The proof of this is to
 be found in a curious letter written by Diana
 of Poitiers, and communicated in autograph to
 the historian we are following:

"To Madame, my good friend, Madame de Mon-
 taigne:

"I have just been told about the poor young
 queen, Jane Grey, beheaded, at the age of
 seventeen, and cannot help weeping at the
 sweet language of resignation she spoke at the
 hour of her death. For never have we seen so

gentle and accomplished a princess, and yet she must perish under the blows of the wicked. When are you coming to visit me, my good friend? I am very desirous of your presence, which would console me in all my sorrows, whatever there may be, that arise and weigh so heavily on me, turning everything into evil. Sometimes these become annoying to such a degree as to make one believe that an abyss lurks in high places. The courier from England has brought me many fine dresses from that country, which, if you come soon to see me, will have a good share in inducing you to leave the place where you are, and make active preparations for staying some time with me, and orders will be given that you shall be provided with everything. Do not pay me off then with fine words or promises, for I would press you in my arms to assure myself the more of your presence. Upon which I pray God very devoutly that he may keep you in health according to the desire of

"Your affectionate, to love and to serve,

"DIANA."

This letter, this pity, and the fine expression "an abyss in high places," prove that the witchery of Diana lay in her genius and in her heart as much as in her fabulous beauty.

The sudden death of Henry II., killed in a tournament by Montgomery, sent Diana to the solitary Château of Anet, where she had prepared her retreat, and where she grew old in tears. The young Mary of Scotland was crowned with her husband, Francis II., who was even more a child in mind and in weakness than in age. The Guises reaped what they had sown in advising this marriage; they reigned through their niece over her husband, and through the king over France. They had the boldness to proclaim publicly their pretensions to the inheritance of the Scottish crown, by emblazoning the arms of the two nations on the escutcheon of the young queen. They testified their attachment for the cause of the Pope by the murder of the Calvinist Anne du

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Bourg, a heroic confessor of the Protestant faith. "Six feet of earth for my body, and the infinite heavens for my soul, is what I shall soon have," cried Anne du Bourg at sight of the scaffold, and in presence of her executioners. Mary Stuart, in whose veins flowed the fanatical blood of her mother, took a bitter sectarian delight in the execution of these heretics by their uncles.

This reign only lasted eleven months. France lost the phantom of a king rather than a master, and barely granted him royal obsequies. Mary alone sincerely mourned him as the mild and agreeable companion of her youth rather than as a husband. The verses which she composed in the first months of her widowhood neither exaggerate nor lessen the sentiment of her grief; they are sweet, sad, but lukewarm as the first melancholy of the soul before the age of passionate despair.

"Ce qui m'estait plaisant
Ores m'est peine dure,
Le jour le plus luisant
M'est nuit noire et obscure.

"Si en quelque séjour,
Soit en bois ou en prée,
Soit sur l'aube du jour
Ou soit sur la vesprée,
Sans cesse mon cœur sent
Le regret d'un absent.

"Si je suis en repos,
Sommeillant sur ma couche,
L'oy qui me tient propos,
Je le sens qui me touche.
En labour et requoy,
Toujours est pres de moi."

"All that once in pleasure met
Now is pain and sorrow;
The brilliant day hath quickly set
In night and dreary morrow.

"Where'er I sojourn, sad, forlorn,
In forest, mead, or hill;
Whether at the dawn of morn,
Or vesper hour so still—
My sorrowing heart shall beat for thee,
This absent one I ne'er shall see!

"When slumbering on my couch I lie,
And dreams the past reveal,
Thy form, beloved, seems ever nigh,
Thy fond caress I feel."

It was in a convent at Reims, where she had retired to enjoy the society of the Abbess Renée of Lorraine, that she lamented so sweetly, not the loss of a throne, but the loss of love. Soon after, she heard of the death of her mother, the Queen of Scotland. A new throne awaited her at Edinburgh, and she prepared for her departure.

"Ah!" cries the poet and adorer, the great Bonsard, on learning the approaching return of the young queen to Scotland—

"Comme le ciel s'il perdait ses étoiles
La mer ses eaux, le navire ses voiles.

Et un anneau sa perle précieuse
Ainsi perdra la France soucieuse
Son ornement, perdant la royauté
Qui fut sa fleur, son éclat sa beauté!"

"Like to the heaven, when starless, dark,
Like seas dried up or sailless bark,
Like ring its precious pearl gone,
Mourns France, without thee sad and lone,
Thou wert her gem, her flower, her pride,
Her young and beauteous royal bride."

"Scotland," continues the poet, "which is about to snatch her from us, becomes so dim in the mist of its seas that her ship will never reach its shores."

"Et celle donc qui la poursuit envain
Retournerait en France tout soudain
Pour habiter son château de Touraine
Lors de chansons j'aurais la bouche pleine
Et dans mes vers si fort je la louerais
Que comme un Cygne en chantant je mourais!"

"But she I've sought long time in vain
May soon to France return again,
To dwell in castle of Touraine!
Then, full of song, my lips would try
To swell her praise, and sing till I,
Like fabled swan, may singing die!"

The same poet, when contemplating her

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dressed in mourning in the park of Fontainebleau some days before her departure, thus with a loving pen traces her image, blending it forever with the beautiful shades of Diana of Poitiers and of Lavallière, which people, in imagination, the waters and woods of that exquisite spot:

“ Un cresse long, subtil et délié,
Pli contre pli rétors et replié,
Habit de deuil, vous sert de couverture
Depuis le chef jusques à la ceinture,
Qui s'enfle ainsi qu'un voile, quand le vent
Souffle la barque et la cingle en avant,
De tel habit vous estiez accoustrée,
Partant, hélas ! de la belle contrée
Dont aviez eu le sceptre dans la main,
Lorsque pensive, et baignant votre sein
Du beau crystal de vos larmes roulées
Triste marchiez par les longues allées
Du grand jardin de ce royal chasteau
Qui prend son nom de la beauté d'une eau.”

“ A long and slender vell of sable crape;
Its folds unfolding, ever folds anew;
The mourning symbol that enwraps thy shape
From head to girdle falls;
Now swelling to the wind, even as the sail
Of bark urged onward by the passing gale;
(Leaving, alas ! this ever beauteous land,
Whose sceptre once was borne by thy fair hand :)
Thus wert thou clad, when thou didst pensive stray
Along the royal garden's paths that day,
Bathing thy bosom with the crystal tears.”

Who does not himself become a lover by reading the verses of such a poet ? But love, or even poetry, according to Brantôme, were powerless to depict her at this still progressive period of her life; to paint that beauty which consisted less in her form than in her fascinating grace: youth, heart, genius, passion, still shaded by the deep melancholy of a farewell; the tall and slender shape, the harmonious movement, the round and flexible throat, the oval face, the fire of her look, the grace of her lips, her Saxon fairness, the pale beauty of her hair, the light she shed around her wherever she went; the night, the void, the desert she left behind when no longer present; the attrac-

tion resembling witchcraft, which unconsciously emanated from her, and which drew toward her, as it were, a current of eyes, of desires, of hearts; the tone of her voice which, once heard, resounded forever in the ear of the listener, and that natural genius of soft eloquence and of dreamy poesy which distinguished this youthful Cleopatra of Scotland. The numberless portraits which poetry, painting, sculpture, and even stern prose have preserved of her all breathe love as well as art; we feel that the artist trembles with emotion, like Ronsard, while painting. A contemporary writer gives a finishing stroke to these delineations by a simple expression, conveying the idea of a restoration of the feelings of youth to all who looked upon her: "*Il n'y avait point de vieillard devant elle,*" cried he—"No man in her presence could feel old;" she could almost vivify death itself.

VI.

A CORTEGE of regret, rather than of mere honor, accompanied her to the vessel which was to bear her to Scotland. He who appeared most grieved among the courtiers was the *Maréchal de Damville*, son of the Great Constable de Montmorency; being unable to follow her to Scotland, on account of his official duties, he resolved to have a constant representative there in the person of a young gentleman of his household, *Du Chatelard*, by whom he might be daily gratified with a narrative of the slightest events, and, so to speak, of every breath drawn by his idol. *Du Chatelard*, unhappily for himself, fell madly in love with her to whom he was the accredited ambassador of another's love. He was a descendant of the *Chevalier Bayard*, brave and adventurous as his ancestor, a scholar and a poet like *Ronsard*, with a tender soul ready to be speedily scorched by such a flame. Everybody knows the touching verses written by Mary, through her tears, on the deck of the vessel, while the coast of France faded in the distance,

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“ Adieu, plaisant pays de France,
 O ma patrie
 La plus chérie,
 Qui a nourri ma jeune enfance !
 Adieu, France; adieu, mes beaux jours;
 La nef qui disjoint nos amours,
 N'a eu de moi que la moitié,
 Une parte te reste, elle est tienne,
 Je la fie à ton amitié
 Pour que de l'autre il te souviennne !”

“ Farewell, thou ever pleasant soil of France,
 Beloved land of childhood's early day !
 Farewell, my France; farewell, my happy years !
 Though from thy shores I now am snatched away,
 Thou still retainest half my loving heart,
 The rest will ne'er forget thee though we part !”

On the 19th of August, 1561—the very day on which she completed her nineteenth year—Mary landed on Scottish ground. The lords who had governed the kingdom in her absence, and the Presbyterian part of the nation, witnessed her arrival with repugnance; they feared her presumed partiality for the Catholicism in which she had been brought up in the courts of the Guises and of Catherine de Medici. Respect, however, for hereditary legitimacy, and the hope of being able to fashion so young a queen to other ideas, prevailed over these prejudices. She was escorted like a queen to the palace of Holyrood, the dwelling of the Scottish monarchs at Edinburgh. The citizens of that capital expressed in mute language a symbolic but conditional submission to her rule, presenting to her, by the hands of a child, the keys of the city, placed between a Bible and a Presbyterian psalm-book, on a silver platter. She was saluted Queen of Scotland on the following day, amid a splendid concourse of Scottish lords and of the French seigneurs of her family and suite. Knox, the Calvin of Scotland, the prophet and agitator of the popular conscience, abstained from appearing at this inauguration; he [seemed desirous of making his submission as a subject depend on the fulfilment of the conditions expressed by the appearance of the Bible and psalm-book on the silver platter. Knox was the Savonarola of Edinburgh;

as over-bearing, popular, and cruel as he of Florence, he stood alone between the people, the throne, and the parliament, as a fourth power representing sacred sedition, a power which claimed a place side by side with the other powers of the state; a man the more to be feared by the queen because his virtue was, so to speak, a kind of fanatical conscience. To become a martyr or to make martyrs for what he believed to be the cause of God were to him indifferent. He was ready to give himself up to the death, and why should he hesitate to devote others to the scaffold?

Scarcely had the first Queen Mary been invested with the regency than he had fulminated against her a pamphlet, entitled "*First Blast of the Trumpet against the monstrous Regimen of Women.*"

"There was in the Lothians—one of the Scottish provinces—a solitary spot where Knox passed several hours every day. Under the shade of the nut-trees, leaning against a rock, or stretched upon the sward near a small loch, he read his Bible, translated into the vulgar tongue; there he concocted his schemes, watching with anxiety for the propitious moment when they should explode into action. When tired of reflection and reading; he would approach nearer to the pool, seat himself on its banks, and crumble some bread to feed the moor-fowl and wild ducks he had succeeded in taming."

Striking image this of his mission among men, which called him to distribute to them the Word—that Bread of Life! Knox loved that desert solitude on the banks of the little lake. "It is sweet," said he, "to rest there, but we must try to please Christ." To please Christ was, in the eyes of Knox, as in those of Philip II. of Spain, or Catherine of Medici, to condemn his enemies.

VII.

THE young queen, feeling the necessity of securing the good-will of such a man, succeeded

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in attracting him to the palace. He appeared in his Calvinistic dress, a short cloak thrown over his shoulder, the Bible under his arm. "Satan," said he, "cannot prevail against a man whose left hand bears a light to illumine his right, when he searches the Holy Scriptures in the hours of night."

"I would," said the queen, "my words might have the same effect upon you as yours have upon Scotland; we should then understand each other, become friends, and our good intelligence would do much for the peace and happiness of the kingdom!" "Madam," replied the stern apostle, "words are more barren than the rock when they are only worldly; but when inspired by God, thence proceed the flower, the grain, and all virtues. I have travelled over Germany; I know the Saxon law, which is just, for it reserves the sceptre for man alone, and only gives to woman a place at the hearth and a distaff!"—thus plainly declaring that he saw in her only a usurper, and that he was himself a republican of the theocratic order.

The queen, alarmed at the impotence of her charms, her words, and her rank on the mailed heart of fanaticism, wept like a child before the sectary; her tears moved but did not discourage him; he continued to preach with wild freedom against the government of women and the pomps of the palace. The populace, already in a state of irritation, became still more excited by his words.

"The pupil of the Guises," he said to them, "parodies France; her farces, prodigalities, banquets, sonnets, masquerades. . . . The paganism of the south invades us. To provide for these abominations the burgesses are taxed, the city treasuries pillaged; Roman idolatry and French vices will speedily reduce Scotland to beggary. Do not the foreigners brought over by this woman infest the streets of Edinburgh by night in drunkenness and debauchery?"

"There is nothing to be hoped for from this Moabite," he added. "Scotland might as well build upon clouds, upon an abyss, over a vol-

cano. The spirit of caprice and pride, the spirit of popery, the spirit of her accursed uncles, the Guises, is within her."

Repelled as she was from the heart of the people, she threw herself into the arms of the nobles. She confided the directions of the government to a natural son of her father James V. who bore the name of the "Lord James," whom she treated as a brother, and elevated to the rank of Earl of Murray. Murray was, by character and spirit, worthy of the confidence of his sister; young, handsome, eloquent like her, he was better acquainted with the country than she was; he had the the friendship of the nobles, wisely managed the Presbyterians, had acquired the esteem of the people, and possessed that loyal ability, that skillful uprightness, which is the gift of great statesmen. Such a brother was a favorite given by nature to the young Queen, and so long as he remained the only favorite he made his sister popular by his government as by his arms. He led her into the midst of the camps, and she fascinated all by her charms and her courage; her address in horsemanship astonished her subjects; she was present at the battle of Corrichie, in which Murray vanquished the rebels and killed the Earl of Huntly, their leader.

Once more mistress of pacified Scotland, Mary returned in triumph to Edinburgh. The moderate but pious Protestantism of Murray contributed to this pacification, by furnishing in his own person a pledge of toleration and even of favor for the new religion. Everything promised Mary Stuart a happy reign for herself and her kingdom, had her heart been devoted to nothing but state policy; but hers was the heart not merely of a queen but of a woman accustomed to the court of France, and to the idolatry of her beauty professed by an entire kingdom. The Scottish nobles were not less enthusiastic than were those of France in this chivalric worship; yet to declare herself sensible to the homage of any one of her subjects would only have been to alienate all the rest by exciting their jealousy; but the politic

watchfulness over herself with relation to the Scottish lords, which had been recommended by Murray, her brother and minister, was precisely that which ruined her. Unconsciously to herself, an obscure favorite insinuated himself into her heart; this favorite, so celebrated afterward for his sudden elevation and tragical death, was named David Rizzio.

VIII.

RIZZIO was an Italian of low birth and menial station. Gifted with a touching voice, a pliant spirit, which enabled him to bow before the great, possessing a talent for playing on the lute, and for composing and for singing that languishing music which is one of the effemina-
cies of Italy, Rizzio had been attached at Turin to the household of the French ambassador at the court of Piedmont in the capacity of musical attendant. On his return to France, the ambassador had brought Rizzio with him to the court of Francis II, and he entered the suite of one of the French nobles who had escorted Mary to Scotland. The young queen had begged him of this nobleman, that she might retain in the country where she was less a queen than an exile one who would be to her as a living memory of the arts, leisure, and delights of France and Italy, those lands of her soul. A musician herself, as she was also a poet—charming frequently her sadness by composing words and airs in which she exhaled her sighs—the society of the Piedmontese musician became habitual and dear to her. The study of his art and even the inferiority of Rizzio's condition concealed for some time the assiduity and familiarity of this intimacy from the observation of the court of Holyrood.

Love for the art had unfortunately led to an undue preference for the artist. There is in music an attractive language without words, which unconsciously creates sympathy, and which gives the musician a powerful influence over the imagination of women of cultivated minds. The delicious, impassioned, or heroic

notes of the voice or of the instrument seem to breathe a soul in unison with those sublime or touching chords. The music and the musician become, as it were, one. Rizzio, after having merely furnished her with amusement in times of sadness, ended by becoming her confidant, and her favor speedily became manifest to all. The musician, rapidly elevated by her from his servile position to the summit of credit and honors, became, under the name of secretary, the reigning favorite and the minister of her policy.

IX.

RUMORS in the palace regarding this preference of the Queen for the Italian were not slow to find an echo in the city, and from thence they spread all over Scotland. Knox made the pulpit resound with allusions and declamations on the corruption of the "woman of Babylon." Murray was grieved and the nobles offended; the clergy thundered; the people were incensed against the queen. The court, meanwhile, was devoted to tourneys, hunting-feasts, banquets, shows, and music, concealing or betraying ignoble love adventures. The queen alienated from herself all hearts for the sake of a mere histrio, of a player on the lute, an Italian, a reprobate Papist, who passed for a secret agent of the Holy See, charged with the task of seducing the queen and fettering the conscience of the kingdom.

X.

EVERYTHING indicates that Mary and Rizzio had resolved to give a tragic diversion to this public scandal, by sacrificing to the Presbyterian rage of the people another favorite than the true one, and thus to satisfy the Protestant clergy by shedding the blood of a foolish enthusiast, the page of the Maréchal de Damville, the young Du Chatelard, who had remained, as we have seen, at Holyrood, for the purpose of entertaining his master with letters about all that related to the queen, his idol. Du Chatelard, treated as a child by the playful indulgence of

the queen, had conceived for his mistress a passion bordering on madness. The queen had encouraged him too much to retain the right of punishing him. Du Chatelard, constantly admitted to the most intimate familiarity with his mistress, ended by mistaking sport for earnest, persuading himself that she only desired a pretext for yielding to his audacity. The ladies of the palace discovered him one night hidden under the queen's bed; he was expelled with indignation, but his boldness was placed to the account of the thoughtlessness of his age and character. Baillery was his only punishment. He continued to profess at court an adoring worship for Mary, filling the palace with his amorous verses, and reciting to the courtiers those lines which Ronsard, possessed with the same image, had addressed to her in Paris.

“Quand cet yvoire blanc qui enfle votre sein
 Quand votre longue, gresle et délicate main
 Quand votre belle taille et votre beau corsage
 Qui ressemble au portrait d'un céleste image;
 Quand vos sages propos, quand vostre douce voix
 Qui pourroit émuvoir les rochers et les bois,
 Las! ne sont plus icy; quand tant de beautez rares
 Dont les graces des cieus ne vous furent avarés,
 Abandonnant la France ont d'un autre costé
 L'agréable sujet de nos vers emporté.
 Comment pourroit chanter les bouches des poètes,
 Quand par vostre départ les muses sont muettes?
 Tout ce qui est de beau ne se garde longtemps;
 Les roses et les lys ne règnent qu'un printemps.
 Ainsi votre beauté seulement apparue
 Quinze ans en nostre France est soudain disparue
 Comme on voit d'un esclair s'évanouir le trait,
 Et d'elle n'a laissé si non que le regret,
 Sinon le déplaisir qui me remet sans cesse
 Au cœur le souvenir d'une telle princesse.

J'envoyray mes penses qui volent comme oiseaux
 Par eux je revoyray sans danger a toute heure
 Cette belle princesse et sa belle demeure;
 Et là pour tout jamais je voudray séjourner,
 Car d'un lieu si plaisant on ne peut retourner.

La nature a toujours dedans la mer lointaine
 Par les bois par les rocs, sous les monceaux d'areins
 Fait naître les beautez et n'a point a nos yeux
 N'y a nous fait présent de ses dons précieux:
 Les perles, les rubis, sont enfans des rivages,

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Et toujours les odeurs sont aux terres sauvages.
Ainsi Dieu qui a soin de vostre royauté
A fait (miracle grand) naistre vostre beauté
Sur le bord estranger, comme chose laissée
Non peur nos yeux hélas! mais pour nostre pensée."

"The ivory whiteness of thy bosom fair;
The long and slender hand so soft and rare;
Thy all-surpassing look and form of love,
Enchanting as a vision from above;
Then thy sweet voice and music of thy speech,
That rocks and woods might move, nor art could reach,
When these are lost, fled to a foreign shore,
With loves and graces, France beholds no more.
How shall the poet sing now thou art gone?
For silent is the muse since thou hast flown:
All that is beauteous short time doth abide,
The rose and lily only bloom while lasteth the spring-
tide.

"Thus here, in France, thy beauty only shone,
For thrice five years, and suddenly is gone;
Like the lightning-flash, a moment bright,
To leave but darkness and regret like night;
To leave a deathless memory behind,
Of that fair princess, in my heart enshrined.
My winged thoughts, like birds, now fly to thee,
My beauteous princess, and her home I see,
And there for evermore I fain would stay,
Nor from that sweetest dwelling ever stray.

"Nature hath ever in her deepest floods,
On loftiest hills, in lonely rocks and woods,
Her choicest treasures hid from mortal ken,
With rich and precious gems unseen of men.
The pearl and ruby sleep in secret stores,
And softest perfumes spring on wildest shores.
Thus God, who over thee his watch doth keep,
Hath borne thy beauty safe across the deep
On foreign shore, in regal pride to rest,
Far from mine eyes, but hidden in my breast."

These beautiful verses of Bonsard were doubtless esteemed an excuse for the passion of a poet equally fascinated but less discreet.

Du Chatelard, surprised a second time hidden behind the curtains of the queen's bed, was sent to trial and condemned to death by the judges of Edinburgh for a meditated treason. With a single word Mary might have commuted his punishment or granted him pardon, but she ungenerously abandoned him to

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the executioner. Ascending the scaffold erected before the windows of Holyrood palace, the theatre of his madness and the dwelling of the queen, he faced death like a hero and a poet. "If," said he, "I die not *without reproach*, like the Chevalier Bayard, my ancestor, like him I die, at least, *without fear*." For his last prayer he recited Ronsard's beautiful Ode on Death. Then casting his last looks and thoughts toward the windows of the palace, inhabited by the charm of his life and the cause of his death, "Farewell!" he cried, "thou who art *so* beautiful and so cruel; who killest me, and whom I cannot cease to love!"

This tragedy was only the prelude to others which were soon after to fill the palace with consternation and bloodshed.

XI.

BUT already state politics began to intermingle with love, and to invade the happiness of the young queen. England, by right of kindred, had always exercised, partly by habit, partly by force, a sort of recognized mediation over Scotland. Elizabeth, the daughter of Henry VIII., less woman than statesman, was not of a character likely to forego this right of mediation. Public and personal policy alike prompted her to retain it, the more so that Mary Stuart possessed eventual rights to the crown of England—rights even more legitimate than her own. In the case of Elizabeth—who gloried in the title of virgin queen—dying without issue, Mary might be called to succeed her on the English throne. The marriage of the Queen of Scots was, therefore, a question which essentially interested Elizabeth, for, according as the Scottish princess should marry a foreign, a Scottish, or an English prince, the fate of England would not fail to be powerfully influenced by the king with whom Mary should divide her two crowns. Elizabeth had begun by supporting the pretensions of her own favorite, the handsome Leicester, to the hand of Mary; then jealousy restrained her, and she

transferred her favor to a young Scot of the almost royal house of Lennox, whose father was devoted to her, and lived at court. She indirectly intimated to Mary that such a marriage would cement an eternal friendship between them, and would be agreeable to both nations. The young Darnley, son of the Earl of Lennox, would thus exclude the pretensions of foreign princes, whose domination might menace the independence of Scotland, and later, perhaps, even that of England, and would besides give to Queen Mary a pledge of domestic harmony in a common Catholic faith. It would please the English, because the house of Lennox had immense possessions in England, and the family inhabited London; it would accommodate the Scotch, for he was a Scot by blood and race, and the Scottish nobles would more readily submit to one of their own countrymen than to an Englishman or a stranger. This judicious reasoning shows in Elizabeth no trace at that time of the perfidy and hatred which historians attribute to her in this negotiation. She certainly gave in this case to her sister Mary of Scotland the wisest counsel likely to assure repose to herself, happiness to her people, and friendship between the two crowns. This advice, moreover, could not fail to be well received by a young queen, whose heart should naturally take precedence of her hand, for Darnley, then in the flower of his youth, was one of the handsomest of men, and the most likely to captivate the eyes and the heart of a young queen by the graces of his person.

Rizzio might perhaps have made himself the sole obstacle to the marriage of Mary; but whether it arose from womanly caprice or from the refined policy of Rizzio, which prompted him to concede a throne in order to retain his influence he favored the idea of Elizabeth by every means, thinking, doubtless, that he might be unable to resist alone, or for a length of time, the enmity of the Scottish nobles leagued against him; that a king was necessary to reduce them to obedience, and that Darnley, who,

though possessing a charming exterior, had only an inferior mind, would be ever grateful to him for placing him on the throne, and would leave him to reign in reality, sheltered from public envy under the protection of the king. History on this point is wholly conjectural, but the renewed and continuous preference of Mary for her favorite leads to the presumption that she accepted Darnley for the purpose of retaining Rizzio in power.

XII.

DARNLEY appeared at Holyrood, and charmed all eyes by his incomparable beauty, but it was that incomplete kind of beauty wanting in the manliness bestowed by years; he had youth in his face, and something of the woman in his shape, which was too slender and unsteady for a king. A change, however, seemed to come over Mary's heart on seeing him, and she bestowed upon him her whole soul with her crown. The recitals of the French ambassador at the Scottish court represent this marriage as the perfect union of two lovers, having but one heart, and ardently enjoying the prolonged revelries of this first bliss of their lives. The Presbyterians alone, with Knox at their head, formed a discordant element in the general happiness. "We should be satisfied," ironically remarked the Earl of Morton; "we are going to be governed by a buffoon Rizzio, a silly child Darnley, and a shameless princess Mary Stuart." "You will hear," writes Paul de Foix, envoy of Catherine de Medici at Holyrood, "of the graceful and pleasant life of the said lady, who employs every morning in hunting, and the evenings in dancing, music, and masquerades." "She is not a Christian," cried Knox from his pulpit, "neither is she woman; she is a pagan divinity—Diana in the morning, Venus in the evening!"

XIII.

MURRAY, the brother of Mary, who had firmly established the kingdom under her rule by his spirited and wise administration, was soon

dismissed by the new king, now counselled and governed by Rizzio. He retired, carrying with him the esteem of the nobles and universal popularity of the nation; the levity of the queen thus prompted her to discard the first statesman in Scotland for a musician, and leave everything to the government of caprice. Under the influence of Charles IX., who then meditated the coming of St. Bartholomew, of the Duke of Alba, Philip the Second's fanatical executioner, and of Catherine of Medici, the fountain-head of the religious persecution in France, Mary joined the League of Bayonne, whose object was to form a plan for the religious unity of all Europe by the extermination of Protestantism. She boasted that she would soon lead her Scottish troops and her Catholic continental allies to the conquest of England, and achieve the triumph of Popery even in London itself. We can easily conceive what dissension and animosity between the two queens would immediately spring from such words when reported to Elizabeth by her envoys at Holyrood; feminine rivalries speedily became intermixed with those of a religious and political nature, to evenom still more the bloody leaven of their hypocritical friendship. The inconstancy of Mary soon began to work out the vengeance of Elizabeth.

XIV.

MARY had, after a few days of marriage, abandoned her transient fondness for the youth she imagined she had loved, conceived a coolness for Darnley, and became again prodigal of everything toward Rizzio, on whom she lavished power and honors, violating the almost sacred etiquette of the times by admitting him to her table in her private apartments, and, suppressing the name of the king in public papers, substituted that of Rizzio. Scotland found she had two kings, or, rather, the nominal king disappeared to give place to the favorite.

XV.

DARNLEY, a prey at once to shame and to jealousy, bore all this like a child, dreaming of the vengeance which he had not the strength to accomplish. The Scottish nobles, feeling themselves humbled in his person, secretly excited in him this ferment of hatred, and offered to rid him at once from the worthless parasite she had palmed on the kingdom as its ruler. What may be called a national plot was formed between them and Darnley, whose objects were the death of the favorite, the imprisonment of the queen, and the restoration of the outraged royal power into the hands of the king.

The clergy and the people would evidently be favorable to the plot; there was no need to conceal it from them, so certain were the conspirators not only of impunity but of public applause. The Earl of Murray, brother of the queen, whom she had so imprudently driven away to deliver herself up to the ascendancy of Rizzio, was consulted, and listened with caution to the incomplete revelations of the plotters. Too honest to participate by his consent in an assassination, he gave his approbation, or at least his silence, to the enterprise for the delivery of Scotland. He promised to return to Holyrood at the call of the lords, and to resume the reins of government in the interest of the heir to the throne, whom Mary already carried in her bosom. Rizzio, defeated and captured, might be embarked and thrown upon the coast of France.

The queen and the favorite, ill-served by a disaffected court, suspected nothing of the plot, though the conspirators, flocking from the most distant castles in Scotland, were already armed and assembled in her antechamber.

On the night of the 9th or 10th of March, 1566, Darnley, the Earl of Lennox, his father, Lord Ruthven, George Douglas, Lindsay, Andrew Ker, and some other lords of the Protestant party, awaited the hour in the king's chamber; three hundred men-at-arms, furnished by the different counties, glided silently into Edin-

burgh one by one under the shade of the walls by the street leading from the city to the palace, ready to succor the conspirators if the queen's guards should attempt to defend her.

According to the French ambassador, the murderers had a still more flagrant and justifiable pretext for the assassination of the favorite than historians relate.

"The king," we read in the dispatches of Paul de Foix to Catherine of Medici, "a few days before had gone to the door of the queen's chamber, which was immediately above his own, about an hour after midnight. After having knocked frequently and no one replying, he called the queen several times, praying her to open the door, and finally threatening to break it open, upon which she admitted him. The king supposed her to be alone in the chamber, till, after having searched everywhere, he discovered David in the cabinet, his only garment being a furred robe."

This was probably the official version given by the king and his accomplices, but the witnesses, and even the actors in the murder, gave a more truthful one of it afterward. The following is the account given by Lord Ruthven, one of the conspirators, after his flight to England, confirmed by unanimous testimony and by documentary evidence.

The queen had unsuspectingly prolonged a nocturnal supper with her favorite, in company with a single female confidante, in a small room of the palace next to her bedchamber. Here let us quote the French writer, who has studied on the spot the most minute circumstances of this event, and who engraves them in our memory as he relates them:

"The king had supped in his own apartment in company with the Earls of Morton, Ruthven, and Lindsay; the king's rooms were on the ground floor, elevated by a few steps, and were situated under the apartments of the queen in the same tower. During the dessert he sent to see who was with the queen. He was told that the queen had finished supper in her little cabinet, with Rizzio and her natural

sister, the Duchess of Argyle. Their conversation had been joyous and brilliant. The king went up by a back stair, while Morton, Lindsay, and a troop of their bravest vassals occupied the great staircase, and dispersed in their passage some of the queen's friends and servants.

"The king passed from the chamber into Mary's cabinet. Rizzio, dressed in a short mantle, a satin vest, and lower clothes of purple velvet, was seated, with his head covered. He wore a cap decorated with a feather. The queen said to the king, 'My lord, have you supped? I thought you were supping now.' The king leaned on the back of the queen's chair, who turned round toward him; they embraced, and Darnley took a share in the conversation. His voice trembled, his face was inflamed, and from time to time he cast anxious glances toward a little door he had left ajar. Soon after a man issued from under the fringes of the curtain which covered it—Ruthven, still pale and shaking with fever, who, in spite of his extreme weakness, had determined to join in the undertaking. He wore a damask doublet lined with fur, a brass helmet, and iron gauntlets; was armed as if for battle, and accompanied by Douglas, Ker, Ballantyne, and Ormiston. At this moment Morton and Lindsay violently burst into the bedchamber of the queen, and, pushing toward the cabinet, rushed into that small room.

"Ruthven threw himself forward with such impetuosity that the floor groaned beneath his weight. Mary and her guests were terrified; his livid, fierce aspect, distorted by illness and wrath, froze them with terror.

"'Why are you here, and who gave you permission to enter?'" cried the queen.

"'I have a matter to settle with David,' replied Ruthven in a deep voice.

"Another of the conspirators coming forward, Mary said to him, 'If David be guilty, I am ready to deliver him up to justice.' 'This is justice!' replied the conspirator, taking a rope from under his mantle.

"Haggard with fear, Rizzio retreated to a corner of the chamber. He was followed, and the poor Italian, approaching the queen, took hold of her dress, crying, 'I am a dead man! giustizial! giustizial! save me, madame! save me!' Mary threw herself between Rizzio and the assassins. She tried to stay their hands. All were crowded and pressed together in that narrow space in one confused mass, Ruthven and Lindsay, brandishing their naked dirks, spoke roughly to the queen; Andrew Ker placed a pistol to her breast and threatened to fire, and Mary, throwing open her bosom, cried,

"Fire, if you do not respect the infant I bear!"

"The table was overturned during this tumult. The queen still struggling, Darnley threw his arms around her and pressed her into a chair, in which he held her down; while the others, taking Rizzio by the neck, dragged him from the cabinet. Douglas seized Darnley's dirk, struck the favorite with it, and leaving the dagger in his back, cried, 'That is the king's stroke!' Rizzio still struggled desperately. He wept, prayed, and supplicated with lamentable groans. He at first clung to the door of the cabinet, and afterward crept to the fireplace; then he grasped the bed-posts of the queen's bed; the conspirators threatened, struck, insulted him, and forced him to let go his hold by pricking his hands with their dirks. Having at last been dragged from the queen's chamber into the anteroom, Rizzio fell, pierced with fifty-five dagger wounds.

"The queen made almost superhuman efforts to fly to the succor of the unhappy man. The king could scarcely restrain her. Placing her in other hands, he hastened to the room where Rizzio lay expiring. He asked if there yet remained anything to do, and plunged his dagger into the poor corpse. After this, Rizzio was tied by the feet with the rope brought by one of the party, and was then dragged down the stairs of the palace.

"Lord Ruthven then returned to the queen's

cabinet, where the table had been replaced. He then sat down and asked for a little wine. The queen was enraged at his insolence. He said he was sick, and pouring out some wine with his own hand into an empty cup (Rizzio's perhaps), he added that 'he could not submit to be governed by a servant. Your husband is here; he is our chief!'

"'Is it so?' replied the queen, still doubtful of Rizzio's death. 'For some time,' said Darnley, 'you have been more devoted to him than to me.' The queen was about to reply, when one of her officers entered, of whom she asked whether David had been taken to prison, and where? 'Madam,' replied he, 'we must speak no more about Rizzio; he is dead.'

"The queen uttered a cry, and then turning to the king, exclaimed, 'Ah, traitor and son of a traitor! is this the reward you reserved for him who has done so much for your good and for your honor? Is this my reward for having by his advice elevated you to so high a dignity? Ah! no more tears, but revenge! No more joy for me till your heart shall be as desolate as mine is this day!' Saying these words, she fainted away.

"All her friends at Holyrood immediately fled in disorder. The Earl of Athol, the Flemings, and Livingstone escaped by a dark passage; the Earls of Bothwell and Huntly slid down a pillar into the garden.

"Meantime a shudder ran through the city. The bells were rung; the burgesses of Edinburgh, with the Lord Provost at their head, assembled instantly around the palace. They asked for the queen, who had now recovered her senses. While some of the conspirators threatened that if she called out she would be slain and thrown over the walls, others assured the burgesses that all went well; that they had only poniarded the Piedmontese favorite, who had conspired with the Pope and the King of Spain to destroy the religion of the Holy Gospel.

"Darnley himself opened a window of the fatal tower and begged the people to retire,

with the assurance that all was done by order of the queen, and that instructions would be given next day.

"Guarded as a prisoner in her own palace, and even in her bed-chamber, without a single female attendant, Mary remained alone all night, delivered up to the horrors of despair. She had been pregnant for seven months, and her emotions were so powerful that the infant she afterward bore, and who became James I. of England, could never look upon a naked sword without a shudder of fear."

XVI.

BUT if Mary's offence was womanly, her vengeance was childish. Rizzio had trusted all to Mary's preference; the accomplices of the king had confided to his puerile jealousy, a sentiment as inconsistent as love in the heart of a husband ready to pardon the queen's fault if she would forgive his revenge. The queen, burying in her memory, with Italian and feminine dissimulation, both the outrage and her resentment, in order the better to pave the way for expiation, passed, in some hours, from imprecations and sobs to a feigned resignation. Trembling for her throne, her liberty, her own life, and that of her unborn child, she undertook to fascinate in his turn the offended husband, whose anger seems to have been at once extinguished in the blood of the offender. The imagination can alone fathom the profound depths of the queen's avenging dissimulation toward him who had given the last stab to the dead body of her favorite.

With astonishing promptitude Mary charmed, reconquered, and again drew toward herself more than ever the eyes and the heart of her young husband. "From the 12th of March, while the blood of Rizzio was still reeking on the floor of the chamber and on the king's hands," writes the French envoy, "the queen resumed all her empire over Darnley; the fascination was so rapid and complete that people

believed in the influence of witchcraft on the part of the queen over her husband."

The real witchcraft was the beauty of the one, the ardent youth of the other, and the intellectual superiority of a woman who now employed her genius and her charms in apparent submission, as she had formerly employed them in offence.

XVII.

THIS reconciliation entirely concealed the new conspiracy between the king and queen against Darnley's own accomplices in the murder of the favorite, but which suddenly became apparent on the 15th of March, six days after the assassination, by the nocturnal flight of the king and queen to the castle of Dunbar, a fortress whence the king could brave his accomplices and the queen her enemies. From thence Mary wrote to her sister, Queen Elizabeth of England, recounting her misfortunes in her own way, and demanding succor against her revolted subjects. She then summoned to Dunbar those nobles who were innocent of the conspiracy against her, and eight thousand faithful Scots obeyed her call. Placing herself with the king at the head of these troops, she marched upon Edinburgh; astonishment and terror went before her; the presence of the king disconcerted the insurgent nobles, clergy, and people, and, without striking a blow, she entered Holyrood. A proclamation was issued forbidding any mention of Darnley as a participator in Rizzio's murder, and all the accomplices in that deed who fell into the queen's hands were beheaded; Ruthven, Douglas and Morton fled beyond the frontiers; she recalled, as chief of her counsel, the able and upright Murray, who had been sufficiently mixed up with the conspiracy to insure his popularity, though sufficiently guarded to preserve his honor. Finally, to gratify her affection, after having attained the objects of her ambition, she threw aside the mask, bewailed the fate of Rizzio, ordered his body to be exhumed, and buried it with regal obsequies

in the sepulchre of the kings in Holyrood chapel.

Reconciled with Darnley, whom she more and more despised; well served by Murray, who brought back to her the affections of the nation, on the 19th of the following June Mary gave birth to a son, destined one day to reign over England. An amnesty, ably counselled by Murray, granted a pardon to the conspirators on the occasion of the auspicious event, and allowed those who had been proscribed to return to their country and their homes.

The hour of vengeance on her husband had, however, come; her aversion for him made their lives miserable, and she no longer took any pains to conceal it. Melvil, one of her most intimate confidants, says, in his memoirs of the reign of his mistress, "I constantly found her, from the time of Rizzio's murder, with her heart full of rancor, and the worst way to pay court to her was to speak of her reconciliation with the king." Such testimony reveals to us the hearts of the actors in this great drama, though hidden under the mask of false appearances.

XVIII.

THE secret cause of this growing aversion was a new love, more resembling a fatality of heart in the career of a modern Phædra than the aberration of a woman and a queen in an age enjoying the light of civilization.

The object of this love was as extraordinary as the passion itself was inexplicable, unless, indeed, we attribute it to the effect of magic or of *possession*, a supernatural explanation of the phenomena of the heart which was common in those superstitious times. But the female heart contains within itself greater mysteries than even magic can explain. The man now beloved by Mary Stuart was Bothwell.

The Earl of Bothwell was a Scottish noble of a powerful and illustrious house, whose principal stronghold was Hermitage Castle in Roxburghshire. He was born with those perverse and unruly instincts which indifferently drive men from exploit to exploit, or from crime to

crime—to a throne or to a scaffold. Impetuous in every impulse, in ambition, and in enterprise, Bothwell was one of those adventurers gifted with superhuman daring, who, in their development and as their desires expand, seek to burst the social bounds within which they exist, to make room for themselves or perish in the attempt. Some men seem born to madness, and Bothwell was one of those. Byron, whose mother's ancestry was connected with the line of Lady Jean Gordon, Bothwell's wife, has depicted him in the romantic and sombre "Corsair;" but the poem is far behind historic truth, for the sovereign poet, Nature, outvies fiction by reality.

XIX.

We know not whether precocious crime, parental severity, or voluntary flight exiled him from the paternal home, but in his early youth he became enrolled among those corsairs of the ocean who stained the coasts, the islands, and the waves of the North Sea with blood. His name, his rank, his courage, had speedily promoted him to the command of one of those squadrons of criminals who had a den wherein to stow their spoils, and an arsenal for their vessels, in a rock-fortress on the coast of Denmark. The crimes of Bothwell, and his exploits among those pirates, lie hidden in the shadow of the past; but his name inspired terror along the shores of the North Sea.

After this stormy youth the death of his father recalled him to his Scottish domains and wild vassals. The troubles of the court of Edinburgh had attracted him to Holyrood, where he discovered a wider field for ambition and crime. He was among those Scottish chiefs who, at the appeal of the king to his subjects while in the castle of Dunbar, hastened thither with their vassals, in the hope of seizing and pillaging Edinburgh. Since the return of the court to Holyrood, he had distinguished himself among the foremost partisans of the queen. Whether inspired by ambition or spurred on by an indefinite hope of subjugating the heart of a woman by striking her imagination,¹ he, at all

events, succeeded in his enterprise; perhaps he knew that the surest way to conquer feminine pride is to appear indifferent to it.

XX.

BOTHWELL was no longer in the flower of his youth; but although he had lost an eye by a wound received in one of his sea-fights, he was still handsome. His beauty was not effeminate, like Darnley's, nor melancholy and pensive like Rizzio's, but of that rude and manly order which gives to passion the energy of heroism. The licentiousness of his manners and the victims of his libertinage had made him well known at the court of Holyrood. He had many attachments among the women of that court, less for their love than their dishonor. One of those mistresses, Lady Reves, a dissipated woman, celebrated by Brantôme for the notoriety of her adventures, was the confidante of the queen. She had retained for Bothwell an admiration which survived their intimacy. The queen, who amused herself by interrogating her confidante regarding the exploits and amours of her old favorite, allowed herself to be gradually attracted toward him by a sentiment which, at first, assumed the appearance of a mere good-natured curiosity. The confidante, divining, or believing she divined, the yet unexpressed desires of the queen, introduced Bothwell one evening into the garden, and even to the apartment of her mistress. This secret meeting forever sealed the ascendancy of Bothwell over the queen. Her passion, though hidden, was, for that reason, still more commanding, and became for the first time apparent to all some weeks after this interview, on the occasion of a wound Bothwell had received in a border feud, on the marches of which he had the command. On hearing of this, Mary mounted on horseback, and rode, without resting by the way, to the Hermitage where he had been carried, assured herself with her own eyes of the danger he had run, and returned the same day to Holyrood.

"The Earl of Bothwell," writes at this time

the French ambassador to Catherine of Medici, "is out of danger, at which the queen is well pleased. To have lost him would have been no small loss indeed to her."

She herself avows her anxiety in verses composed on the occasion:

" Pour lui aussi j'ai pleuré mainte larme
D'abord quand il se fit de ce corps possesseur
Duquel alors il n'avait pas le cœur !
Puis me donna une autre dure alarme
Et me pensa oter vie et frayeur !"

" When first my master he became,
For him I shed full many a tear;
But now this new and dire alarm
Destroys in me both life and fear !"

After his cure Bothwell became master of the kingdom. Every thing was lavished on him as previously on Rizzio, and he accepted all, not as a subject but as a master. The king, shut out from the councils of the queen, and even from her society as his wife, "walked about alone," says Melvil, "from place to place, and it was evident to all that she regarded it as a crime that any one should keep company with him."

"The Queen of Scots and her husband," writes the Duke of Bedford, envoy of Elizabeth at the court of Scotland, "live together as before, and even worse; she rarely sits at table, and never sleeps with him; she in no wise esteems his society, and loves not those who entertain friendship for him. To such an extent does she exclude him from business that when she leaves the palace to go out he knows nothing. Modesty forbids me to repeat what she has said of him, and which would not be honorable to the queen."

The insolence of the new favorite partook of the ferocity of his former life; he once drew his dagger in full council before the queen to strike Lethington another member of the council, for having objected to his advice.

The king, outraged every day by Bothwell's contempt, and sometimes by his insults, retired to Glasgow, where he lived in the house of his

father, the Earl of Lennox. The queen and Bothwell became alarmed lest he should make public complaint against the humiliation and neglect to which he was condemned, appeal to the discontented among the nobility, and in his turn march against Edinburgh. It is to this motive and to Bothwell's fear, rather than to his desire to become the husband of the queen, that we must attribute the odious crime which soon after threw the world into consternation, and of which Mary Stuart was at least the accomplice, if she were not the principal actor. In all the acts of the queen which preceded this tragedy there are not only proofs of complicity in the plan for assassinating her husband, but something even still more atrocious—namely, the hypocritical art of a woman who hides murderous intentions under the appearance of love; who lends herself to the vile office of decoying her victim and drawing him within reach of the sword of the assassin.

Without granting to Mary's correspondence with Bothwell, be it real or apocryphal, more historical authority than it deserves, it is evident that a correspondence of that nature did exist between the queen and her seducer, and if she did not write what is contained in those letters (which are not written by her own hand, and the authenticity of which is consequently suspected), still she acted in all the preliminaries of the tragedy in such a manner as to leave no doubt of her participation in the snare by which the unfortunate and amorous Darnley was inveigled.

The letters written at Glasgow by the queen to Bothwell breathe insensate love for her favorite and implacable aversion for her husband. They inform Bothwell day by day of the state of Darnley's health, of his supplications to be received by the queen as a king and a husband; of the progress which her blandishments make in the confidence of the young king, whose hopes she now nursed; of his resolution to return with her and to go with her wherever she might wish, even to death, provided she would restore to him her heart and

his connubial rights, Although these letters, we repeat, may possess no material textual authenticity in our eyes, though they even bear the traces of falsehood and impossibility in the very excess of their wickedness and cynicism, it is yet certain that they very nearly approach the truth; for a grave and confidential witness of the conversations between Darnley and the queen at Glasgow gives a narrative in perfect conformity with this correspondence. He even quotes expressions identical with those in the letters, proving that if the words were not written, they were at least spoken between the queen and her husband.

We therefore dismiss as improbable the text of these letters, adopted as authentic by M. Dargaud and by a number of the most accredited historians of England; but it is impossible for us to avoid acknowledging that the part taken by Mary in the death-snare spread for Darnley was a substantial confirmation of the perfidy inferred from this correspondence.

Certain it is that the queen, on hearing of the flight of Darnley to the house of his father, the Earl of Lennox, suddenly left her favorite Bothwell, and repairing to one of her pleasure castles called Craigmillar, near Edinburgh, secretly convoked the confederated lords of her own and Bothwell's party. The French ambassador remarks on her sadness and anxiety; her torment between the fears of her husband and the demands of her favorite was such as to make her cry out in presence of the ambassador, "I wish I were dead!" She craftily proposed to the assembled lords, who were friendly to Bothwell, to give up to Darnley the government of Scotland; they protested against this, as she doubtless expected, and gave utterance to threats of deadly import against Darnley! "We will deliver you from this competitor," they said. "Murray, though present, and protesting as we do, will not join in our measures, but he will leave us free to act, *watching us as from between his fingers!* Leave us to act for ourselves, and when things are

accomplished the parliament will approve of all." The queen's silence was sufficient to give authority to these sinister resolutions, and her departure for Glasgow on the following day served them yet more effectually. She leaves the conspirators at Craigmillar; against all propriety or expectation she proceeds to Glasgow, where she finds Darnley recovering from the small-pox, overwhelms him with tenderness, passes days and nights by his pillow, renews the scenes of Holyrood after the murder of Rizzio, and finally consents to the conjugal conditions implored by Darnley. In vain is Darnley warned of the danger he incurs in following the queen to Craigmillar into the midst of his enemies; he replies that though it may appear strange, he will follow the queen he adores even to death. The queen leaves Glasgow before him, to await his restoration to health, prolongs with him the tenderest farewells, and places on his finger a ring, as a precious pledge of reconciliation and love.

What is there in the disputed letters more perfidious than this? These particulars are at all events authentic; they are the narrative of Mary's daily life at Glasgow with her husband.

XXI.

CERTAIN now that he will fall into the snare, she returned to Holyrood, where she was received by torchlight in the midst of a festival prepared for her. Darnley followed her shortly after. Under pretext of promoting his recovery, apartments were prepared for him in a solitary country-house in the neighborhood, called Kirk o' Field, with no other attendants than five or six servants, underlings sold to Bothwell, and whom he ironically called his *lambs*. Only a favorite page, named Taylor, slept in Darnley's chamber. The queen came to visit him with the same demonstrations of tenderness as she exhibited at Glasgow, but refused to live with him yet. Darnley, astonished at this isolation, fell into deep melancholy, from which he sought relief by praying

and weeping with his page. An inward presentiment seemed to warn him of approaching death.

XXII.

MEANTIME the festivities at Holyrood continued. At the close of one of these feasts, during which Bothwell had conversed much and alone with the queen, the favorite (according to the testimony of his valet Dalglish) came home and retired to bed; soon afterward he calls his valet and dresses; one of his agents enters and whispers something in his ear; he takes his riding-cloak and sword, covers his face with a mask, puts on a hat with a broad brim, and proceeds, at one o'clock in the morning to the king's solitary dwelling.

What happened on that mysterious night? We know not; the only thing known is that before the morning twilight a terrible explosion was heard at Holyrood and in Edinburgh. The house of Kirk o' Field was blown to atoms, and its ruins would have buried the victim, but owing to a strange forgetfulness on the part of the assassins, the bodies of Darnley and his page had been left lying in an orchard attached to the garden, where they were found next morning, bearing on their bodies, not the marks of gunpowder but those of a deadly struggle and of strangulation. It was supposed that the king and his page, hearing the steps of the murderers early in the night, had tried to escape by the orchard, but had been overtaken and strangled by Bothwell's assassins, and their bodies left on the scene of the murder by negligence, or in ignorance of the explosion which was to have destroyed the murderers with their victims. It is added that Bothwell, believing that the corpses of Darnley and the page were in the house, had needlessly fired the mine, and had returned to Holyrood after the explosion, believing that no vestiges of the murder remained, and hoping that Darnley's death would be attributed to the accidental explosion of a store of gunpowder fired by his own imprudence.

However that might be, Bothwell went home without betraying any agitation; again went to rest before the end of the night, and when his attendants awoke him and told him of what had occurred, manifested all the surprise and grief of perfect innocence, and, leaping from his bed, cried "Treason!"

The two bodies were not discovered in the orchard till daylight.

XXIII.

MORNING spread horror with the rumor of this murder among the people of Edinburgh. The emotion was so great that the queen was forced to leave Holyrood and take refuge in the castle. She was insulted by the women as she passed along the streets; avenging placards covered the walls, invoking peace to the soul of Darnley and the vengeance of heaven on his guilty wife. Bothwell, mounted on horseback, and sword in hand, galloped through the streets, crying, "Death to the rebels, and to all who speak against the queen!"

Knox ascended the pulpit for the last time and fearlessly exclaimed, "Let those who survive speak and avenge!" Then shaking the dust from off his feet, he turned his back upon Edinburgh and retired to await death or vengeance.

Such was the fate of Darnley. Up to this point the queen might be suspected, but had not been convicted of his murder; but what followed removed all doubt of her participation — by espousing the murderer she adopted the crime.

Sedition being calmed for a time, she proclaimed her grief at Holyrood by assuming the garb of a mourning widow, and remained for some days shut up in her apartments, with no other light than the dim glimmering of lamps. Bothwell was accused of regicide before the judges of Edinburgh, at the instance of the Earl of Lennox, the king's father. The favorite, with undaunted audacity, supported by the queen and by the troops, devoted, as usual, to

the reigning power, appeared in arms before the judges and insolently exacted from them an acquittal. The same day he rode forth, mounted on one of Darnley's favorite horses, which the people recognized with horror bearing his murderer. The queen saluted him from her balcony with a gesture of encouragement and tenderness. The French ambassador saw this, and expressed to his court the indignation it excited in him.

XXIV.

"THE queen seems insane," writes at the same period one of the witnesses of these scandalous outbursts of passion; "all that is most infamous is uppermost in this court—God help us! The queen will very soon marry Bothwell. She has drunk all shame to the dregs. 'What matters it,' she said yesterday, 'if I lose for his sake France, Scotland, or England? sooner than leave him I would go with him to the ends of the world in nothing but a petticoat!' She will never stop till she has ruined all here; she has been persuaded to let herself be carried off by Bothwell to accomplish the marriage sooner. This was an understood thing between them before the murder of Darnley, of which she was the adviser and he the executioner."

This was the language of an enemy, but the event very soon justified the wrathful prophecy. Some days after the 24th of April, while returning from Stirling where she had been visiting her son, Bothwell, with a body of his friends, awaited her at Almond Bridge, six miles from Edinburgh. He dismounted from his horse, respectfully took hold of the bridle of the queen's palfrey, feigned a slight compulsion, and conducted his voluntary captive to the castle of Dunbar, of which he was governor, as warden of the borders. There she passed with him eight days, as if suffering violence, and returned on the 8th of May with him to Edinburgh, "resigned," she said, "to marry with her consent him who had disposed of her by force." This comedy deceived no one, but

saved Mary from the open accusation of espousing from choice the assassin of her husband.

Bothwell, besides the blood which stained his hands, had three other wives living. By gold or threats he rid himself of two, and he divorced the third, Lady Gordon, sister of the Earl of Huntly. In order to secure this divorce, he consented to be found guilty of adultery. The verses written by Mary at this period and addressed to Bothwell prove the jealousy with which she regarded this repudiated but still loved wife.

“Ses paroles fardées,
Ses pleurs ses plaincts remplis d'affection
Et ses hauts cris et lamentation,
Ont tant gagné que par vous sont gardées
A ses ecrits encor foy vous donnez
Aussi l'aymez et croyez plus quemoy.

Vous la croyez, las! trop je l'apperceoy,
Et vous doutez de ma ferme, constance,
A mon seul bien et ma seule espérance,
Et ni vous puis assurer de ma foy,
Vous m'estimez légère que je voy,
Et n'avez en moi nulle assurance,
Et soupceonnez mon cœur sans apparence
Vous défiant a trop grand tort de moy,
Vous ignorez l'amour que je vous porte.
Vous soupceonnez qu'aulture amour me transporte,
Vous estimez mes paroles du vent,
Vous depeignez decire elas! mon cœur
Vous me pensez femme sans jugement,
Et tout cela augmente mon ardeur.

Non amour croist, et plus en plus croistra,
Tant que vivry.”

“Her painted words, complaints, and tears,
Her cries, her loud laments, her fears,
Though feigned, deceitful, every art,
Are cherished still within thy heart.
To all she writes full faith thou give't,
In her love more than mine thou livest.
Still, still thou trustest her too well, I see,
And doubted ever my firm constancy.
O my sole hope! My solitary bliss!
Could I but show thee my true faithfulness,
Too lightly thou esteem'st my love, my pain,
Nor of my faith can full assurance gain.
With dark suspicion thou dost wrong my heart.
As if another in my love had part;
My words and vows seem but a fleeting wind,
Deft of wit, a woman's idle mind!

Alas! all this increases but the flame
That burns for thee forever and the same.

My love still grows, and evermore will grow,
So long as life shall in this bosom glow!"

Why, after such an avowal, carved in characters of poetic immortality, need we calumniate the queen who thus calumniates herself with her own hand?

She only refused Bothwell one thing—the tutelage and guardianship of her son, who was kept at Stirling. Violent and noisy quarrels took place about this at Holyrood, even on the evening before the marriage of the widow and her husband's assassin. The French ambassador heard the turmoil. Bothwell insisted, and the queen, determined to resist, called loudly for a dagger wherewith to kill herself.

"On the day after the ceremony," writes the ambassador, "I perceived strange clouds on the countenances both of the queen and her husband, which she tried to excuse, saying that if I saw her sad it was because she had no reason to rejoice, desiring nothing but death."

The expiation had begun. A league of indignation was formed by the Scottish lords against her and Bothwell. Thus confederated to avenge the blood-stained and dishonored throne, they, on the 13th of June, 1567, met the troops of the queen and Bothwell at Carberry Hill. Courage deserted their partisans before the battle; they were defeated. Bothwell, covered with blood, rode up to the queen, when all hope of safety from flight was already lost. "Save your life," cried he, "for my sake; we shall meet in happier times!" Bothwell seemed to desire death. The queen burst into tears. "Will you keep faithful to me, madam," said he, in a doubtful accent, "as to a husband and king?" "Yes," she replied, "and in token of my promise I give you my hand!" Bothwell carried her hand to his lips; kissed it, and fled to Dunbar, followed by only a dozen horsemen.

The lords conducted the queen as a prisoner to Edinburgh Castle. In passing through the

army she was assailed with the imprecations of the military and the populace. The soldiers waved before her horse a banner, on which was represented the dead body of Darnley lying beside his page in the orchard of Kirk o' Field, and the little King James on his knees invoking the vengeance of heaven against his mother and the murderer of his unhappy father, in these words of the royal poet of Israel, "Judge and avenge my cause, O Lord!"

"By this royal hand," she said to Lord Lindsay, who had aided in the unpardonable murder of her first favorite Rizzio, "I'll have your heads for this!"

On her arrival in Edinburgh she took courage even in the excess of her humiliation. She appeared, says a chronicle of Edinburgh, at the window fronting the High Street, and addressing the people in a firm voice told them how she had been thrown into prison by her own traitorous subjects; she showed herself many times at the same window in miserable plight, her dishevelled hair flowing over her shoulders and bosom, her body uncovered nearly to the girdle. At other times she became softened, and assuming the accents of a suppliant, "Dear Lethington," she said, "you, who have the gift of persuasion, speak to these lords; tell them I pardon all who will consent to place me in a vessel with Bothwell, whom I espoused with their approbation at Holyrood, and leave us to the mercy of the winds and waves." She wrote the most impassioned letters to Bothwell, which were intercepted by her jailers at the gates of her prison. Finally she was conducted with a small escort through a hostile country to the castle of Lochleven, belonging to the Douglasses.

Lady Douglas, who inhabited this stronghold, had been the mistress of King James V., the queen's father, and was the mother of Lord James Murray. "Of a proud and imperious spirit," says a Scottish historian, "she was accustomed to boast that she was the lawful wife of James, and her son Murray his legiti-

mate issue, who had been supplanted by the queen."

The castle, situated in the county of Kinross, was built on an island in the middle of a small lake which bathed its walls and intercepted all flight. There she was treated by the Douglasses with the respect due to her rank and misfortunes.

Queen Elizabeth saw with alarm the triumph of this revolt against the queen. She prevailed on Murray, who was respected by all parties, to undertake the government during Mary's captivity. Murray went to Lochleven to confer with his captive sister about the fate of the kingdom, and of James, the infant heir to the throne. Hopefully she saw him assume the supreme authority, believing with reason that he would be indulgent toward her. She learned from him that Bothwell had fled to the Shetland Islands, where he had embarked for Denmark, there to resume, with his old companions, the sea robbers, the life of pirate and a brigand, the only refuge fortune had left him. We shall afterward find him closing in captivity and insanity a life passed alternately in disgrace and on a throne, in exploits and in assassinations. The queen's heart never forsook him.

She made several attempts to escape from Lochleven to join Bothwell or to fly to England. The historian we quote, who has visited its ruins, thus describes the first prison of the queen:

"The sojourn at Lochleven, over which romance and poetry have shed their light, must be depicted by history only in its nakedness and horrors. The castle, or rather fortress, is a massive block of granite, flanked by heavy towers, peopled by owls and bats, eternally bathed in mists, and defended by the waters of the lake. There languished Mary Stuart, oppressed by the violence of the Presbyterian lords, torn by remorse, troubled by the phantoms of the past and by the terrors of the future."

There she is said to have given birth to a

daughter, the fruit of her guilty love, who died long after unknown in a convent in Paris.

The English ambassador, Drury, thus relates to his sovereign the last unsuccessful attempt at escape:

"Toward the 25th of last month (April, 1568) she very nearly escaped, thanks to her habit of passing the mornings in bed. She acted in this way: The washerwoman came early in the morning, as she had often done, and the queen, as had been arranged, donned the woman's cap, took up a bundle of linen, and covering her face with her cloak, left the castle and entered the boat used in traversing the loch. After some minutes one of the rowers said laughingly, "Let us see what kind of lady we have got," at the same time attempting to uncover her face. To prevent him she raised her hands, and he remarked their beauty and whiteness, which made him immediately suspect who she was. She showed little fear, and ordered the boatmen, under pain of death, to conduct her to the coast. They refused, however, rowed back toward the island, promising secrecy toward the commander of the guard to whom she was confided. It appears that she knew the place where, once landed, she could take refuge, for she saw, in Kinross (a little village near the banks of the loch), George Douglas and two of her former most devoted servants wandering about in expectation of her arrival.

George Douglas, the youngest son of that house, was passionately in love with the captive. His enthusiastic admiration for her beauty, rank, and misfortunes, determined him to brave all dangers in the attempt to restore her to liberty and her throne. He arranged signals with the Hamiltons and other chiefs, who, on the opposite side of the loch, awaited the hour for an enterprise in favor of the queen. The signal agreed upon for the flight, which was to be a fire kindled on the highest tower of the castle, at length shone forth in the eyes of the Hamiltons. Soon an unperceived boat glides over the lake, and, approaching its banks, delivers to them the fugitive queen.

They throw themselves at her feet, carry her off to the mountains, raise their Catholic vassals, form an army, revoke her abdication, fight for her cause under her eyes at Langside against the troops of Murray, and are a second time defeated. Mary, without refuge and without hope, fled to England, where the letters of Queen Elizabeth led her to expect the welcome due from one sovereign to another. Mary thus wrote to Elizabeth from the Cumberland borders:

"It is my earnest request that your Majesty will send for me as soon as possible, for my condition is pitiable, not to say for a queen, but for a simple gentlewoman. I have no other dress than that in which I escaped from the field; my first day's ride was sixty miles across the country, and I have not since dared to travel except by night. Make known to me now the sincerity of your natural affection toward your true sister, cousin, and sworn friend. Remember that I once sent you my heart on a ring, and now I bring you my true heart and my body with it, to tie more firmly the knot of friendship between us!"

XXV.

WE may see by the tone of this letter, so different from her boasting when she threatened the downfall of Elizabeth and the invasion of England by the Scottish Catholics, how Mary's mind and tongue could conform to the changing times.

Elizabeth had the choice of two policies—the one magnanimous, to welcome and relieve her unfortunate cousin; the other openly hostile, to profit by her reverses, or to dethrone her a second time by her freely expressed condemnation. She adopted a third policy, indefinite, dissembling, caressing in speech, odious in action, which delivered up her "sister" by turns to hope and to despair, wearing out the heart of her rival by endless longing, as if she had resolved that grief, anguish, and time should be her executioners. This queen, so

great in genius, so mean in heart, cruel by policy, and rendered more so by feminine jealousies, proved herself, in this instance, the worthy daughter of Henry the Eighth, all whose passions were slaked in blood.

She offered to Mary the Castle of Carlisle as a royal refuge, and detained her there as in a prison. She wrote that she could not with propriety treat her as a queen and a sister till she should clear herself of the crimes imputed to her by her Scottish subjects. She thus evoked before her own tribunal, as a foreign queen, the great suit pending between Mary Stuart and her people. By assuming this attitude, her influence in Scotland, whose queen she retained as a prisoner, and whose regent, Murray, had everything to hope or to fear from her, became all powerful. She was about to rule over Scotland as arbiter, and even without an army. This policy, counselled, it is said, by her great minister Cecil, was ignoble, but national. To receive Mary with honor would infer an amnesty to the murderers of Darnley, approbation of the marriage with Bothwell, and the supremacy of adultery. It would be to restore her to the throne of Scotland. All this would give mortal offence to Protestant England, and to the Presbyterian half of Scotland. By setting Mary at liberty, she would only deliver her into the hands of Spain, of France, and of the Catholic house of Austria, to make her the lever, by the aid of which those powers would agitate Scotland, snatching her from England to give her up to Popery. These ideas were expedient in policy, but the avowal of them was humbling to a queen, and above all to a woman, the more so that Mary was her own kinswoman. The whole secret of this temporizing craft of Elizabeth lay in the impossibility of openly avowing a course which served her views, but which dishonored her in the eyes of Europe.

"No, madam," replied Mary from Carlisle Castle, "I have not come hither to justify myself before my subjects, but to punish them, and to demand your succor against them. I

neither can nor will reply to their false accusations; but knowing well your friendship and good pleasure, I am willing to justify myself to you, though not in the form of a suit with my subjects. They and I are in no wise equal; and should I even remain here forever, rather would I die than recognize such a thing!"

Already she was in reality a captive. The Spanish ambassador in London, Don Guzman da Silva, who had gone to Carlisle to offer to her the condolence of his court, thus describes her abode in the castle:

"The room occupied by the queen is dark, and has but one window, garnished with bars of iron. It is entered through three other rooms, guarded and occupied by armed men. In the last, which forms an antechamber to the queen's room, Lord Scrope is stationed, who is governor of the border district of Carlisle. The queen has only three of her women with her. Her attendants and domestics sleep outside the castle. The gates are opened only at ten o'clock in the morning. The queen is allowed to go as far as the city church, but is always escorted by a hundred soldiers. On asking Lord Scrope to send her a priest to say mass, he replied that in England there were none."

Alarmed at the evidently evil intentions of Elizabeth, Mary implored the interference of France. Forgetting her secret hatred of Catherine de Medici, she wrote to her, and also to Charles IX. and the Duke of Anjou, asking them to aid her.

To the Cardinal of Lorraine she wrote, with the same purpose, as follows:

CARLISLE, 21st June, 1568.

"I have not wherewith to buy bread, nor shift, nor robe. The queen has sent me a little linen, and has furnished me with a dish (*plat*). You also have a share in this shame; Sandy Clarke, who stays in France on the part of that false bastard (Murráy), has boasted that you would not give me money, nor interfere with my affairs. God tries me much. At least, be assured that I shall die a Catholic. God will take me away from these miseries very soon;

for I have suffered insults, calumnies, imprisonments, hunger, cold, heat, flight, without knowing whither; ninety miles have I rode across the country without stopping or dismounting, and then have had to sleep on hard beds, drink sour milk, and eat oatmeal without bread. I have been three nights without my women in this place, where, after all, I am no better than a prisoner. They have pulled down the houses of my servants, and I cannot help or reward them; but they still remain constant to me, abhorring those cruel traitors, who have only three thousand men under their command, and if I had succor, the half would leave them for certain. I pray God that he send help to me, which will come when it pleases him, and that he may give you health and long life.

"Your humble and obedient niece,

MARIE R."

The silence of Elizabeth froze her with terror, and she resorted to much feminine persuasion in order to obtain an answer from her:

"From CARLISLE, 5th July, 1568.

"My good sister, . . . seeing you, I think I could satisfy you in all. Alas! do not act like the serpent, who shutteth his ear: for I am not an enchanter, but your sister and cousin. . . . I am not of the nature of the basilisk, nor of the chameleon, to turn you into my likeness, even if I were so dangerous or so bad as they say; you are sufficiently armed with constancy and justice, the which I ask also of God, and that he may give you grace to make good use of them, with tongue and with a happy life.

"Your good sister and cousin, M. R."

Mary's apprehensions were soon realized. Elizabeth determined to remove her from the Scottish Marches. On the 28th July, 1568, the august captive was conducted, in spite of her energetic protestations, to Bolton Abbey, in the county of York, which belonged to Lord Scrope, brother-in-law to the Earl of Norfolk.

After her arrival there she wrote in a very

different style to the Queen of Spain, wife of Philip II.:

"If I had hope of succor from you or your kindred, I would put religion in *Subs* [meaning that she would promote the triumph of Catholicism], or would die in the work. All this country where I am is devoted to the Catholic faith, and because of that, and of my right that I have in me to this kingdom, little would serve to teach this Queen of England the consequence of intermeddling and aiding rebel subjects against their princes! For the rest, you have daughters, madam, and I have a son; . . . Queen Elizabeth is not much loved by either of the two religions, and, thank God, I have a good part in the hearts of the honest people of this country since my arrival, even to the risk of losing all they have with me and for my cause! . . . Keep well my secret, for it might cost me my life!"

It will be seen that, from the first days of her stay in England, while caressing Elizabeth with one hand she wove with the other, and with strangers as well as with her own subjects, that net in which she was herself caught at last. Captivity was her excuse, religion her pretext; oppression gave her a right to conspire; but if she could urge her misfortunes as a reason for thus plotting, she could not with truth urge her innocence. She unceasingly demanded from Madrid and from Paris armed interventions against Scotland and against Elizabeth. Her whole life during her captivity was one long conspiracy; the inhuman and unprincipled duplicity of Elizabeth's policy justified all she did.

XXVI.

A CIRCUMSTANTIAL narrative of this captivity, of this conspiracy of nineteen years, however interesting in reality, would be monotonous as history. Nothing diversifies it save the different localities and prisons, and the plots continually renewed, only to be as often frustrated.

At Hampton Court, the palace presented

to Henry VIII. by Wolsey, conferences were opened to settle the differences between Queen Mary and her subjects. Murray and the Scots brought forward, as proofs of the complicity of Mary in the murder of her husband, her sonnets to Bothwell, and the letters of that favorite, found in a silver casket carved with the arms of Francis II., her first husband.

Neither accusations nor justifications being satisfactory, Elizabeth broke off the conference without pronouncing judgment, watching the struggle between the different factions which distracted Scotland. It seems probable that she trusted to these very factions for delivering their country into her hands sooner or later. Meantime she left Scotland to its fate.

"Would you like to marry my sister of Scotland?" ironically asked Elizabeth of the Earl of Norfolk, who was believed to be smitten by the charms of his prisoner. "Madam," replied the earl, horrified at such an idea, "I shall never espouse a wife whose husband cannot lay his head with safety on his pillow."

XXVII.

MURRAY, guardian of the infant king James and dictator of the kingdom, governed the unhappy country with vigor and address. But a proscribed gentleman of good family, James Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh, whose wife Murray had left to die in misery and madness on the threshold of her own dwelling, which had been bestowed by the regent on Bellenden, one of his partisans, swore to avenge at once his wife and his country. Gathering a handful of the earth which covered the bier of his wife, he wore it within his girdle as an eternal incentive to revenge; and, repairing in disguise to the small town of Linlithgow, through which Murray had to pass on his return to Edinburgh, he placed himself at a window, fired upon and killed the regent. He then mounted a horse ready for him behind the house, and by swift flight escaped the regent's guards. "I alone,"

cried the dying Murray, "could have saved the church, the kingdom, and the king; anarchy will now devour them all!"

The assassin fled to France, where he was well received by the Guises, who saw in him an instrument of murder, ready to deliver them from their enemy, the Admiral Coligny. They wrote to their niece Mary, persuading her to urge Bothwellhaugh to the commission of this crime. Mary's reply was characterized by all the shamelessness of the times, when assassination was merely regarded as a justifiable act of hatred.

"As for that of which you write from my cousin M. de Guise, I wish that so wicked a creature as the personage in question (the Admiral) were out of the world, and would be very glad if some one pertaining to me should be the instrument, and yet more, that he should be hanged by the hands of the executioner, as he deserves; you know how I have that at heart, . . . but to meddle or order anything in this way is not my business. What Bothwellhaugh has done was without my command; but I am well pleased with him for it—better than if I had been of his counsel."

Murray was her brother, and had twice been her minister and her preserver from the avengers of Darnley's death. Elizabeth deplored him as the protector of the reformed religion in Scotland. The anarchy he had foretold in his dying words immediately followed. The Earl of Lennox, father of Darnley, father-in-law of Mary, and grandfather of James, was named regent. The party of James and the party of his mother, Mary, vied with each other in crimes. Lennox was killed in battle. The Earl of Morton assumed the regency in his place. He ruled like an executioner, sword in hand, overwhelmed the party of the queen by the terrors of his government and by a deluge of blood. But scarcely had he placed the sceptre in the hands of his ward than the favorites of the young king had him put to death as an accomplice in the murder of Rizzio. He did not deny the crime, and died like a man

who expected the ingratitude of princes. James VI. had been brought up by him in detestation of the religion of his mother and in contempt for herself.

XXVIII.

DURING the minority of the Scottish king, Mary conspired with the Earl of Norfolk, whom she had fascinated anew, to get possession of England in the name of Catholicism. A correspondence with Rome, revealed by unfaithful agents, furnished proofs of this plot. Norfolk was consigned to the scaffold, Mary shut up in a still closer captivity, and Elizabeth began to find out the danger of keeping in her strongholds an enchantress whose jailers all became her adorers and accomplices.

The massacre of St. Bartholomew, those Sicilian Vespers of religion and policy, made Elizabeth tremble. The example of so triumphant a plot, she feared, might tempt the Catholics of England, who would find in Mary another Catherine of Medici, younger, and hardly less scrupulous than the queen-mother of Charles IX.

The advisers of Elizabeth represented to her, for the first time, the necessity of the immediate trial and death of the Queen of Scots, to secure the peace of the kingdom, and perhaps even the safety of her own life. Her most eminent statesmen, Burleigh, Leicester, and Walsingham, were unanimous in recommending this sacrifice.

"Alas!" hypocritically replied Elizabeth, "the Queen of Scotland is my daughter, but she who knows not how to behave toward her mother deserves a step-mother."

The feelings and intercourse of the two queens was still further embittered by the feminine malice of Mary's conduct toward Elizabeth. History would not credit this, if the proof did not exist among its archives. Knowing the somewhat equivocal predilection of Elizabeth for her handsome favorite Leicester, whom she had herself hoped to fascinate, and with whom she kept up a correspondence,

she had the audacity to rally her rival on the inferiority of her charms.

Under cover of recrimination against the Countess of Shrewsbury, who had accused Mary of attracting her husband to Sheffield, Mary wrote a letter to Elizabeth, in which she attributes to Lady Shrewsbury remarks so insulting to Elizabeth as a woman and a queen that the wickedness of the expressions forbids us to quote them. She ends the letter thus: "She told me that your speedy death was predicted in an old book; that the reign succeeding yours would not last for three years; after that there was another leaf in the book which she would never tell me of."

We may well suppose that this last leaf related to Mary herself, and doubtless predicted her accession to the throne of England, and the restoration of the Church throughout that kingdom! The terms used in this letter show that it was an indirect method, ingeniously contrived by the hatred of an imprisoned rival, to throw at her enemy those insults which were likely to be most keenly felt by the heart of a queen and a woman. One is astonished at so much audacity and outrage on the part of a captive queen, when, by a single word, Elizabeth could have retorted with death; but death at this moment was less terrible to Mary than revenge was sweet. What a spectacle history offers in these two queens condescending thus to unyielding strife; the one tempting punishment, the other holding the sword of Damocles constantly suspended over the head of her rival!

XXIX.

MEANWHILE Europe, upon which Mary had relied, forgot her; but she did not forget Europe. Her detention, attended at first by circumstances befitting her royal rank, became closer and closer as she changed her prisons. She describes in pathetic terms the sufferings of her last prison but one, in a letter to the envoy of Charles IX. at London.

"It is of old carpentry, with openings at

every half foot, so that the wind blows into my chamber on all sides; I know not how it will be possible for me to keep the little health I have recovered. My physician, who has himself suffered much from it, has protested that he will altogether give up my cure if I be not placed in a better lodging, he himself, while watching me during my meals, having experienced the incredible cold caused by the wind in my chamber, notwithstanding the stoves and fires that are always there, and the heat of the season of the year; I leave you to judge how it will be in the middle of winter. This house is situated on a mountain, in the middle of a plain ten miles in extent, being exposed to all the winds and inclemencies of heaven. . . . I pray you to request her in my name, assuring her that there are a hundred peasants in these mean villages better lodged than I am, who have for my sole dwelling two small chambers.

. . . So that I have not even a room where I can retire apart, as I have divers occasions for doing, nor for walking about alone; and, to tell you all, I have never before been so badly lodged in England."

Her Scottish attendants, the companions of her flight and her captivity, sank one by one under this tedious agony of imprisonment. She learned, we know not whether with joy or grief, the death of her husband Bothwell, after a wandering life on the waves of the North Sea, where, as we have seen, he had resumed the infamous calling of a pirate. Surprised in a descent on the coast of Denmark, and chained in the cell of a rock-prison, Bothwell died in a state of insanity; the extraordinary oscillations of his fortune, his miraculous elevation and dizzy fall, had shaken his reason. He recovered it, however, at the last moment, and whether it arose from the power of truth or of tenderness, he dictated to his jailers a justification of the queen in the matter of Darnley's death, and took the crime and its expiation wholly upon himself. The queen was moved by this dying declaration, which, in the eyes of her partisans, restored to her that innocence which her ene-

mies still deny to her memory. Bothwell was so loaded with crimes that even his dying words were no pledge of truth, but his declaration was at least a proof that his love had survived twenty years of separation and punishment.

XXX.

THE dangers to which the Protestant succession in England would be exposed if Elizabeth—now advanced in age, and who had never shared her throne with a husband—should die before Mary, appear to have decided her council to perpetrate the state crime, which the queen till then had refused to authorize. No one entertained doubts of the permanent conspiracy of the Queen of Scots with the Catholic princes of Europe, and with the Catholic party in Scotland and in England. This conspiracy, which was the right of a captive queen, could only appear criminal in the eyes of her jailers and persecutors. No guilt had yet appeared to Elizabeth or to her chief counsellors sufficiently clear to bring the Queen of Scots to trial ; it was necessary to find another crime of more flagrant and odious nature in order to justify the murder in the eyes of Europe. The unscrupulous temerity of Mary and the cunning of her enemies in council soon furnished one to Elizabeth.

Mary was ceaselessly engaged in concocting those innumerable plots so identified in her mind with the Catholic cause ; her correspondence, ardent as her sighs, agitated Scotland, England, and the Continent. Notwithstanding her age, her ineffaceable beauty, her grace, her seductive manners, her rank, her genius, attracted toward her new agents, whose worship for her was intimately allied to love.

In the words of Mr. Fraser Tytler, the eminent Scottish historian, “ we now enter upon one of the most involved and intricate portions of the history of England and of Scotland—the ‘Babington plot,’ in which Mary was implicated, and for which she afterward suffered.”

One of the Earl of Derby's gentlemen, named Babington, brought up in the household of the Earl of Shrewsbury, where he had become acquainted with the queen while she was a prisoner at Bolton Abbey, had resolved to serve and save her. Babington had gone over to the Continent, and was at Paris the agent of the correspondence in which the queen was engaged with France and Spain to bring about her deliverance and restoration. The death of Elizabeth was the preliminary object of this plot. Two Jesuits of Reims, named Allen and Ballard, did not recoil from this regicidal crime. Ballard came to London, sought out Babington, who had returned from France, enlisted him in the cause of Queen Mary's deliverance, and also through him enrolled a handful of Catholic conspirators, ready to dare all for the triumph of religion. Walsingham, the chief counsellor and minister of Elizabeth, who had brought the spy-system to a state of what might be called infamous perfection, and had his tools and agents everywhere, who insinuated themselves into the confidence of the conspirators, urged them on to the execution of their designs, at the same time revealing all to him, and, with a malignant ingenuity, even adding to the reality by inventions of their own, in order, doubtless, to please their employer and lead the more certainly to the accomplishment of his aim.

One of these spies, named Gifford, whose earnestness seemed to place him above suspicion at the French embassy, in which was the repository of the correspondence, received letters, pretended he had forwarded them to their address, but conveyed them secretly to Walsingham. These letters prove some hesitation at first on the part of the conspirators regarding the propriety of the assassination of Elizabeth, and afterward a more decided resolution in favor of the murder, after a consultation with Father Ballard, the Jesuit of Reims. One of the letters, bearing the signature of Babington, thus addressed Mary.

"Very dear Sovereign : I myself, with six gentlemen, and a hundred others of our com-

pany and following, will undertake the deliverance of your royal person from the hands of your enemies. As for that which tends to rid us of the usurper, from the subjection of the. . ."

At the subsequent trial the *copy only* of a letter from Mary in reply was produced, containing these words: "These things being prepared, and the forces, without as well as within the kingdom, being all ready, it is necessary that the six gentlemen should be set to work, and orders given that, their design being effected, I may then be taken hence, and all the troops be at the same time in the field to receive me while awaiting the succors from abroad, who must also hasten with all diligence. . . ." Mary solemnly declared that she never wrote this letter; and although she insisted on the original being shown, it never appeared, its only substitute being an alleged copy in the handwriting of Phellips, one of Walsingham's creatures, and an expert forger of autographs. No trace of any such original letter has ever been found; and when we consider Elizabeth's evident anxiety to get rid of her troublesome captive, her subsequent remorse, the unscrupulous efforts of Walsingham to please his mistress, by fair means or foul, and the zeal of his spies and tools, we cannot but arrive at the conclusion that this letter, which was so fatal to Mary, but which no one ever saw, was a forgery executed by Phellips, who, besides, is proved to have added a postscript of his own to another of Mary's letters now extant.

These letters were placed by Gifford in the hands of the queen's council, and Ballard and Babington were arrested at Walsingham. The conspirators could not deny the plot, for portraits of all the six were found in a regicide picture, executed by their own order, surmounted by this device: "Our common peril is the bond of our friendship." They were tried and executed on the 20th of September, together with Ballard and Babington.

XXXI.

THE punishment of her friends impressed Mary with a presentiment of her own fate. Involved in their plots, and more feared than they were, she could not long remain in suspense as to her own destiny. She was carried, in fact, some days afterward to Fotheringay Castle, her last prison. This feudal residence was solemn and gloomy, even as the hour of approaching death. Elizabeth, after long and serious deliberation, at last named thirty-six judges to examine Mary and to report to the council. The Queen of Scots protested against the right of trying a queen and of judging her in a foreign country, where she was forcibly detained as a prisoner.

"Is it thus," cried she, when she appeared before the commissioners, "that Queen Elizabeth makes kings be tried by their subjects? I only accept this place" (pointing to a seat lower than that of the judges) "because as a Christian I humble myself. My place is there," she added, raising her hand toward the dais. "I was a queen from the cradle, and the first day that saw me a woman saw me a queen!" Then turning toward Melvil, her esquire, and the chief of her household, on whose arm she leaned, she said, "Here are many judges, but not one friend!"

She denied energetically having consented to the plan for assassinating Elizabeth; she insinuated, but without formally asserting, that secretaries might easily have added to the meaning of the letters dictated to them, as none were produced in her own handwriting. "When I came to Scotland," she said to Lord Burleigh, the principal minister, who interrogated her, "I offered to your mistress, through Lethington, a ring shaped like a heart, in token of my friendship; and when, overcome by rebels, I entered England, I in my turn received from her this pledge of encouragement and protection." Saying these words, she drew from her finger the ring which had been sent her by Elizabeth. "Look at this, my lords, and an-

swer. During the eighteen years that I have passed under your bolts and bars, how often have your queen and the English people despised it in my person!"

XXXII.

THE commissioners, on their return to London, assembled at Westminster, declared the Queen of Scots guilty of participation in the plot against the life of Elizabeth, and pronounced upon her sentence of death. The two houses of parliament ratified the sentence.

Mary asked, as a single favor, not to be executed in secret, but before her servants and the people, so that no one might attribute to her a cowardice unworthy of her rank, and that all might bear testimony to her constancy in suffering martyrdom. Thus she already spoke of her punishment, a consolatory idea most natural in a queen who desired that her death should be imputed to her faith rather than to her faults. She wrote letters to all her relatives and friends in France and Scotland.

"My good cousin," she wrote to the Duke of Guise, "who art the most dear to me in the world, I bid you farewell, being ready by unjust judgment to be put to death—what no one of our race, thanks to God, has ever suffered, much less one of my quality. But, praise God, my good cousin, for I was useless in the world to the cause of God and of his Church, being in the state in which I was; and I hope that my death will testify my constancy in the faith, and my readiness to die for the maintenance and restoration of the Catholic Church in this unhappy island; and though never executioner dipped his hands in our blood, be not ashamed, my friend, for the judgment of heretics and the enemies of the Church, who have no jurisdiction over me, a free queen, is profitable before God to the children of his Church. If I had yielded to them I would not have suffered this stroke. All of our house have been persecuted by this sect; witness your good father, with whom I hope to be received by the mercy

of the just Judge. I recommend to you my poor servants, the payment of my debts, and the founding of some annual masses for my soul; not at your expense, but to make solicitation and ordinance as may be required, and as you will learn my intentions from my poor afflicted servants, eye-witnesses of this my last tragedy.

"God prosper you, your wife, children, brothers, and cousins, and above all our chief, my good brother and cousin, and all his. May the blessing of God and that which I would bestow on my children be yours, whom I recommend less to God than my own—who is unfortunate and ill-used.

"You will receive tokens from me to remind you to pay for the soul of your poor cousin, deprived of all help and counsel but that of God, who gives me strength and courage to resist alone so many wolves howling after me; to him be the glory.

"Believe, in particular, what will be told you by a person who will give you a ruby ring from me, for I take it to my conscience that you shall be told the truth in that with which I have charged her, specially as to what regards my poor servants, and the share of each. I recommend to you this person for her simple sincerity and honesty, that she may be settled in some good place. I have chosen her as the least partial, and no will the more plainly report to you my commands. I pray you that it be not known that she have said anything particular to you, for envy might injure her.

"I have suffered much for two years and more, and have not made it known to you for an important reason. God be praised for all, and give you the grace to persevere in the service of the Church as long as you live; and never may this honor depart from our race, that, men as well as women, we have been ready to shed our blood to maintain the cause of the faith, putting aside all other worldly conditions; as for me, I esteem myself born, on both father's and mother's side, to offer my blood in this matter, and have no intention

of falling back. Jesus crucified for us and all the holy martyrs, make us, through their intercession, worthy of the voluntary sacrifice of our bodies for his glory!

"Thinking to humble me, my dais had been thrown down, and, afterward, my guardian offered to write to the queen, as this act was not by her command, but by the advice of some one in the council. I showed them, in place of my arms on the said dais, the cross of my Saviour. You will understand all this discourse; they were milder afterward."

This letter is signed, "*Votre affectionnée cousine et parfaite amye-Marie R. d'Ecosse, D. de France.*"

XXXIII.

WHEN she was shown the ratification of her sentence, and the order for her execution signed by Elizabeth, she tranquilly remarked, "It is well; this is the generosity of Queen Elizabeth! Could any one believe she would have dared to go to these extremities with me, who am her sister and her equal, and who could not be her subject? Nevertheless, God be praised for all, since he does me this honor of dying for him and for his Church! Blessed be the moment that will end my sad pilgrimage; a soul so cowardly as not to accept this last combat on earth would be unworthy of heaven!"

On the last moments of her life we shall follow the learned and pathetic historian who has treasured up, so to speak, her last sighs. The queen, guilty till then, became transformed into a martyr by the approach of death. When the soul is truly great it grows with its destiny; her destiny was sublime, for it was at once an accepted expiation and a rehabilitation through blood.

XXXIV.

It was night, and she entered her chapel and prayed, with her naked knees on the bare pavement. She then said to her women, "I would eat something, so that my heart may not

fail me to morrow, and that I may do nothing to make my friends ashamed of me." Her last repast was sober, solemn, but not without some sallies of humor. "Wherefore," she asked Bastien, who had been her chief buffoon, "dost thou not seek to amuse me? Thou art a good mimic, but a better servant."

Returning soon after to the idea that her death was a martyrdom, and addressing Bourgoïn, her physician, who waited on her, and Melvil, her steward, who were both kept under arrest, as well as Préaux, her almoner: "Bourgoïn," said she, "did you hear the Earl of Kent? It would have taken another kind of doctor to convict me. He has acknowledged besides that the warrant for my execution is the triumph of heresy in this country. It is true," she rejoined with pious satisfaction, "they put me to death not as an accomplice of conspiracy, but as a queen devoted to the Church. Before their tribunal my faith is a crime, and the same shall be my justification before my Sovereign Judge."

Her maidens, her officers, all her attendants were struck with grief, and looked upon her in silence, being scarcely able to contain themselves. Toward the end of the repast Mary spoke of her testament, in which none of their names were to be omitted. She asked for the silver and jewels which remained, and distributed them with her hand as with her heart. She addressed farewells to each, with that delicate tact so natural to her, and with kindly emotion. She asked their pardon, and gave her own to every one present or absent, her secretary Nau excepted. They all burst into sobs, and threw themselves on their knees around the table. The queen, much moved, drank to their health, inviting them to drink also to her salvation. They weepingly obeyed, and in their turn drank to their mistress, carrying to their lips the cups in which their tears mingled with the wine.

The queen, affected at this sad spectacle, wished to be alone. She composed her last will. When written and finished, Mary, alone

in her chamber with Jane Kennedy and Elizabeth Curle, asks how much money she has left. She possessed five thousand crowns, which she separates into as many lots as she has servants, proportioning the sums to their various ranks, functions, and wants. These portions she placed in an equal number of purses for the following day. She then asked for water, and had her feet washed by her maids of honor. Afterward she wrote to the king of France:

"I recommend to you my servants once more. You will ordain, if it please you, for my soul's sake, that I be paid the sum that you owe to me, and that for the honor of Jesus Christ, to whom I shall pray for you to-morrow at the hour of my death, there may be enough to found a mass for the repose of my soul, and for the needful alms. This Wednesday, at two of the clock after midnight.

"M. R."

She now felt the necessity of repose, and lay down on her bed. On her women approaching her, she said, "I would have preferred a sword in the French manner, rather than this axe." She then fell asleep for a short time, and even during her slumber her lips moved as if in prayer. Her face, as if lighted up from within with a spiritual beatitude, never shone with a beauty so charming and so pure. It was illuminated with so sweet a ravishment, so bathed in the grace of God, that she seemed to "smile with the angels," according to the expression of Elizabeth Curle. She slept and prayed, praying more than she slept, by the light of a little silver lamp given her by Henry II., and which she had preserved through all her fortunes. This little lamp, Mary's last light in her prison, was as the twilight of her tomb; humble implement made tragic by the memories it recalls!

Awaking before daylight, the queen rose. Her first thoughts were for eternity. She looked at the clock, and said, "I have only two hours to live here below." It was now six o'clock.

She added a postscript to her letter addressed to the King of France, requesting that the interest of her dowry should be paid after her death to her servants; that their wages and pensions should continue during their lives; that her physician (Bourgoin) should be received into the service of the king, and that Didier, an old officer of her household, might retain the place she had given him. She added, "Moreover, that my almoner may be restored to his estate, and in my favor provided with some small curacy, where he may pray God for my soul during the rest of his life." The letter was thus subscribed: "Faict le matin de ma mort, ce mercredy huitiesme Fevrier, 1587. Marie, Royne. Done on this morning of my death, this Wednesday, eighth February, 1587. Mary, Queen."

A pale winter daybreak illuminated these last lines. Mary perceived it, and, calling to her Elizabeth Curle and Jane Kennedy, made a sign to them to robe her for this last ceremony of royalty. While their friendly hands thus apparelled her she remained silent. When fully dressed she placed herself before one of her two large mirrors inlaid with mother-of-pearl, and seemed to consider her face with pity. She then turned round and said to her maidens: "This is the moment to guard against weakness. I remember that, in my youth, my uncle Francis said to me one day in his house at Meudon, 'My niece, there is one mark above all by which I recognize you as of my own blood. You are brave as the bravest of my men-at-arms, and if women still fought as in the old times, I think you would know well how to die.' It remains for me to show to both friends and enemies from what race I have sprung."

She had asked for her almoner Préaux; two Protestant ministers were sent to her. "Madam, we come to console you," they said, stepping over the treshold of her chamber. "Are you Catholic priests?" she cried. "No", replied they. "Then I will have no comforter but Jesus," she added, with a melancholy firmness.

She now entered her chapel. She had there

prepared with her own hands an altar, before which her almoner sometimes said mass to her secretly. There, kneeling down, she repeated many prayers in a low voice. She was reciting the prayers for the dying when a knock at the door of her chamber suddenly interrupted her. "What do they wish of me?" asked the queen, arising. Bourgoyn replied from the chamber where he was placed with the other servants, that the lords awaited her Majesty. "It is not yet time," she replied; "let them return at the hour fixed." Then, throwing herself anew on her knees between Elizabeth Curle and Jane Kennedy, she melted into tears, and striking her breast gave thanks to God for all, praying to him fervently and with deep sobs that he would support her in her last trial. Becoming calmer by degrees, in trying to calm her two companions, she remained for some time in silent and supreme converse with her God.

What was passing at that moment within her conscience?

She then went to the window, looked out upon the calm sky, the river, the meadows, the woods. Returning to the middle of the chamber and casting her eyes toward the time-piece (called *la Reale*), she said to Jane, "The hour has struck, they will soon be here."

Scarcely had she pronounced these words when Andrew, sheriff of the county of Northampton, knocked a second time at the door, and, her women drawing back, she mildly commanded them to open it. The officer of justice entered, dressed in mourning, a white rod in his right hand, and, bowing before the queen, twice repeated, "I am here."

A slight blush mounted to the queen's cheeks, and, advancing with majesty, she said, "Let us go."

She took with her the ivory crucifix, which had never left her for seventeen years, and which she had carried from cell to cell, suspending it in the various chapels of her captivity. As she suffered much from pains brought on by the dampness of her prisons, she leaned on two of her domestics, who led her to the

threshold of the chamber. There they stopped, and Bourgoign explained to the queen the strange scruple of her attendants, who desired to avoid the appearance of conducting her to slaughter. The queen, though she would have preferred their support, made allowance for their weakness, and was content to lean on two of Paulet's guards. Then all her attendants accompanied her to the uppermost flights of stairs, where the guards barred their passage in spite of their supplications, despair, and lamentations, with their arms extended toward the dear mistress whose footsteps they were hindered from following.

The queen, deeply pained, slightly quickened her steps, with the design of protesting against this violence and of obtaining a more fitting escort.

Sir Amyas Paulet and Sir Drew Drury, the governor of Fotheringay, the Earl of Shrewsbury, the Earl of Kent, the other commissioners, and many strangers of distinction, among whom were Sir Henry Talbot, Edward and William Montague, Sir Richard Knightly, Thomas Brudnell Bevil, Robert and John Wingfield, received her at the bottom of the stair.

Perceiving Melvil bent down with grief, "Courage, my faithful friend," she said; "learn to resign thyself." "Ah, madam," cried Melvil, approaching his mistress and falling at her feet, "I have lived too long, since my eyes now see you the prey of the executioner, and since my lips must tell of this fearful punishment in Scotland." Sobs then burst from his breast instead of words.

"No weakness, my dear Melvil!" she added. "Pity those who thirst for my blood, and who shed it unjustly. As for me, I make no complaint. Life is but a valley of tears, and I leave it without regret. I die for the Catholic faith, and in the Catholic faith; I die the friend of Scotland and of France. Bear testimony everywhere to the truth. Once more, cease, Melvil, to afflict thyself; rather rejoice that the misfortunes of Mary Stuart are at an end. Tell my son to remember his mother."

While the queen spoke, Melvil, still on his knees, shed a torrent of tears. Mary, having raised him up, took his hand, and, leaning forward, embraced him. "Farewell," she added, "farewell, my dear Melvil; never forget me in thy heart or thy prayers!"

Addressing the Earls of Shrewsbury and Kent, she then asked that her secretary Curle might be pardoned; Nau was left out. The earls keeping silence, she again prayed them to allow her women and servants to accompany her, and to be present at her death. The Earl of Kent replied that such a course would be unusual, and even dangerous; that the boldest would desire to dip their handkerchiefs in her blood; that the most timid, and, above all, the women, would at least trouble the course of Elizabeth's justice by their cries. Mary persisted. "My lords," said she, "if your queen were here, your virgin queen, she would not think it fitting for my rank and my sex to die in the midst of men only, and would grant me some of my women to be beside my hard and last pillow." Her words were so eloquent and touching that the lords who surrounded her would have yielded to her request but for the obstinacy of the Earl of Kent. The queen perceived this, and, looking upon the puritan earl, she cried in a deep voice,

"Shed the blood of Henry VII., but despise it not. Am I not still Mary Stuart? a sister of your mistress and her equal: twice crowned; twice a queen; dowager Queen of France; legitimate Queen of Scotland." The earl was affected, but still unyielding.

Mary, with softer look and accent, then said, "My lords, I give you my word that my servants will avoid all you fear. Alas! the poor souls will do nothing but take farewell of me; surely you will not refuse this sad satisfaction either to me or to them? Think, my lords, of your own servants, of those who please you best; the nurses who have suckled you; the squires who have borne your arms in war; these servants of your prosperity are less dear to you than to me are the attendants of my misfort-

unes. Once more, my lords, do not send away mine in my last moments. They desire nothing but to remain faithful to me, to love me to the end, and to see me die."

The peers, after consultation, agreed to Mary's wishes. The Earl of Kent said, however, that he was still doubtful of the effect of their lamentations on the assistants, and on the queen herself.

"I will answer for them," Mary replied; "their love for me will give them strength, and my example will lend them courage. To me it will be sweet to know they are there, and that I shall have witnesses of my perseverance in the faith."

The commissioners did not insist further, and granted to the queen four attendants and two of her maidens. She chose Melvil her steward, Bourgoin her physician, Gervais her surgeon, Gosion her druggist, Jane Kennedy and Elizabeth Curle, the two companions who had replaced Elizabeth Pierrepont in her heart. Melvil, who was present, was called by the queen herself, and an usher of Lord Paulet was sent for the others, who had remained at the upper balcony of the stair, and who now hastened down, happy even in their anguish to perform this last duty of devotion and fidelity.

Appeased by this complaisance on the part of the earls, the queen beckoned to the sheriff and his followers to advance. She was the first to lead the melancholy procession to the scaffold.

She arrived in the hall of death. Pale, but unflinching, she contemplated the dismal preparations. There lay the block and the axe. There stood the executioner and his assistant. All were clothed in mourning. On the floor was scattered the sawdust which was to soak her blood, and in a dark corner lay the bier which was to be her last prison.

It was nine o'clock when the queen appeared in the funeral hall. Fletcher, Dean of Peterborough, and certain privileged persons to the number of more than two hundred, were assembled. The hall was hung with black cloth;

the scaffold, which was elevated about two feet and a half above the ground, was covered with black frieze of Lancaster; the armed chair in which Mary was to sit, the foot-stool on which she was to kneel, the block on which her head was to be laid, were covered with black velvet.

The queen was clothed in mourning like the hall and as the ensigns of punishment. Her black velvet robe, with its high collar and hanging sleeves, was bordered with ermine. Her mantle, lined with marten sable, was of satin, with pearl buttons and a long train. A chain of sweet-smelling beads, to which was attached a scapulary, and beneath that a golden cross, fell upon her bosom. Two rosaries were suspended to her girdle, and a long veil of white lace, which, in some measure, softened this costume of a widow and of a condemned criminal, was thrown around her.

She was preceded by the sheriff, by Drury and Paulet, the earls and nobles of England, and followed by her two maidens and four officers, among whom was remarked Melvil, bearing the train of the royal robe. Mary's walk was firm and majestic. For a single moment she raised her veil, and her face, on which shone a hope no longer of this world, seemed beautiful as in the days of her youth. The whole assembly were deeply moved. In one hand she held a crucifix and in the other one of her chaplets.

The Earl of Kent rudely addressed her, "We should wear Christ in our hearts."

"And wherefore," she replied quickly, "should I have Christ in my hand if he were not in my heart?" Paulet assisting her to mount the scaffold, she threw upon him a look full of sweetness.

"Sir Amyas," she said, "I thank you for your courtesy; it is the last trouble I will give you, and the most agreeable service you can render me."

Arrived on the scaffold, Mary seated herself in the chair provided for her, with her face toward the spectators. The Dean of Peterbor-

ough, in ecclesiastical costume, sat on the right of the queen, with a black velvet footstool before him. The Earls of Kent and Shrewsbury were seated like him on the right, but upon larger chairs. On the other side of the queen stood the sheriff Andrews, with white wand. In front of Mary were seen the executioner and his assistant, distinguishable by their vestments of black velvet, with red crape round the left arm. Behind the queen's chair, ranged by the wall, wept her attendants and maidens. In the body of the hall the nobles and citizens from the neighboring counties were guarded by the musketeers of Sir Ayns Paulet and Sir Drew Drury. Beyond the balustrade was the bar of the tribunal. The sentence was read; the queen protested against it in the name of royalty and innocence, but accepted death for the sake of the faith.

She then knelt down before the block, and the executioner proceeded to remove her veil. She repelled him by a gesture, and turning toward the earls with a blush on her forehead, "I am not accustomed," she said, "to be undressed before so numerous a company, and by the hands of such grooms of the chamber."

She then called Jane Kennedy and Elizabeth Curle, who took off her mantle, her veil, her chains, cross, and scapulary. On their touching her robe, the queen told them to unloose the corsage and fold down the ermine collar, so as to leave her neck bare for the axe. Her maidens weepingly yielded her these last services. Melvil and the three other attendants wept and lamented, and Mary placed her finger on her lips to signify that they should be silent.

"My friends," she cried, "I have answered for you, do not melt me; ought you not rather to praise God for having inspired your mistress with courage and resignation?" Yielding, however, in her turn to her own sensibility, she warmly embraced her maidens; then pressing them to descend from the scaffold, where they both clung to her dress, with hands bathed in their tears, she addressed to them a tender blessing and a last farewell. Melvil and his compan-

ions remained, as if choked with grief, at a short distance from the queen. Overcome by her accents, the executioners themselves besought her on their knees to pardon them.

"I pardon you," she said, "after the example of my Redeemer."

She then arranged the handkerchief embroidered with thistles of gold, with which her eyes had been covered by Jane Kennedy. Thrice she kissed the crucifix, each time repeating, "Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit." She knelt anew, and leaned her head on that block which was already scored with deep marks; and in this solemn attitude she again recited some verses from the psalms. The executioner interrupted her at the third verse by a blow of the axe, but its trembling stroke only grazed her neck; she groaned slightly, and the second blow separated the head from the body. The executioner held it up at the window, within sight of all, proclaiming aloud, according to usage, "So perish the enemies of our queen!"

The queen's maids of honor and attendants enshrouded the body, and claimed it, in order that it should be sent to France; but these relics of their tenderness and faith were pitilessly refused. Relics which might rekindle fanaticism were to be feared.

But that cruel prudence was deceived by the result. Mary's death resembled a martyrdom; her memory, which had been execrated alike by the Scottish Presbyterians and the English Protestants, was practically adopted by the Catholics as that of a saint. The passions were Mary's judges; therefore she was not fairly judged, nor will she ever be.

Elizabeth, having thus mercilessly sacrificed the life of her whom she had so long and so unjustly retained in hopeless captivity, now added the most flagrant duplicity to her cruelty. Denying, with many oaths, all intention of having her own warrant carried into execution, she attempted to throw the entire odium on those who in reality had acted as her blind and devoted agents. This policy of the English queen was unsuccessful, however; posterity has

with clear voice proclaimed her guilty of the blood of her royal sister, and the sanguinary stain will ever remain ineffaceable from the character of that otherwise great sovereign.

If we regard Mary Stuart in the light of her charms, her talents, her magical influence over all men who approached her, she may be called the Sappho of the sixteenth century. All that was not love in her soul was poetry; her verses, like those of Ronsard, her worshiper and teacher, possess a Greek softness combined with a quaint simplicity; they are written with tears, and even after the lapse of so many years retain something of the warmth of her sighs.

If we judge her by her life, she is the Scottish Semiramis; casting herself, before the eyes of all Europe, into the arms of the assassin of her husband, and thus giving to the people she had thrown into civil war a coronation of murder for a lesson of morality.

Her direct and personal participation in the death of her young husband has been denied, and nothing in effect, except those suspected letters, proves that she actually and personally accomplished or permitted the crime; but that she had attracted the victim into the snare; that she had given Bothwell the right and the hope of succeeding to the throne after his death; that she had been the end, the means, and the alleged prize of the crime; finally, that she absolved the murderer by bestowing upon him her hand—no doubt can be entertained regarding these points. To provoke to murder and then to absolve the perpetrator—is not this equivalent to guilt?

In fine, if she be judged by her death—comparable, in its majesty, its piety, and its courage, to the most heroic and the holiest sacrifices of the primitive martyrs—the horror and aversion with which she had been regarded change at last to pity, esteem, and admiration. As long as there was no expiation she remained a criminal; by expiation she became a victim. In her history blood seems to be washed out by blood; the guilt of her former years flows, as it were, from her veins with the crimson stream;

we do not absolve, we sympathize; our pity is not absolution, but rather approaches to love; we try to find excuses for her conduct in the ferocious and dissolute manners of the age; in that education, depraved, sanguinary, and fanatical, which she received at the court of the Valois; in her youth, her beauty, her love. We are constrained to say with M. Dargand—to whom we feel deeply indebted for the researches which have guided us—"We judge not; we only relate."

THE END.

